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THE  
GOSPEL ADVOCATE,  
FOR  
PROMOTING SPIRITUAL UNITY.

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VOL. XIV.

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EDITED BY A. J. BAXTER,

PASTOR OF CAVENDISH PLACE CHAPEL, EASTBOURNE, SUSSEX

All Profits arising from this Magazine are devoted to the assistance of the Lord's  
Poor Ministers and their Widows.

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## POETRY.

THE  
**GOSPEL ADVOCATE:**  
FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY.

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There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."—Eph. iv. 5.

"For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."—1 Cor. xi. 13.

"Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 28.

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VOLUME XIV.


JANUARY, 1882.

No. 157

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OUR NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

DEAR FRIENDS,—

 O those of you whose faith and hope blend with theirs who have crossed the stormy seas of Time and entered the peaceful haven of Eternal Life (and with only such we can expect our Magazine to find acceptance), we heartily desire in the prospect of this opening year the sweetest and richest manifestation and enjoyment of the tender mercies of our God, in the frequent visitations of the Dayspring from on high.

It seems almost incredible that thirteen years should have passed away, bearing on the flood-tide of each month, week, day, and minute, those countless changes which have transpired since first this periodical was started. How many known and loved in the Lord have during this space of time been removed from our circle! Brethren in the ministry, and brethren and sisters in Christ, have disappeared from the scene of their toils, conflicts, and cares to unite in the everlasting anthems of the glorified. We could almost envy them their sacred repose in the bosom of everlasting love. For we truly feel that we have not "as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance" (in glory) which, saith Moses, "the Lord your God giveth you," Deut. xii. 9. In the beloved Saviour we have indeed often by faith had a sweet antepast of it. We have known experimentally the preciousness of Hart's description of the believer's blessedness, when he

"Reclines his head on Jesus' breast,  
Glides softly into promised rest,  
And proves the Sabbath true."



And we are fully persuaded, whatever may be the sufferings and sorrows of the people of God, and however potent and prevalent unbelief may be in its workings within them, that there remains a rest to them in the Redeemer's FINISHED WORK—a rest into which they shall by the Spirit enter, and which shall surely be supplemented by the unbroken felicity of heaven.

But such creatures of sensation are we that, the circumstances into which we are brought too much influence our frames and feelings in seasons of adversity and darkness. As "the soul of the people (of Israel) was much discouraged because of the way" (Num. xxi. 4), and in their dejection lost sight of all their past and present delivering and supplying benefits—their escape from Egypt, the Heaven-dropping manna, the rock-flowing stream, the never-failing guidance of the pillar of fire and cloud—so is every child of God prone to make too much of his tribulations, and infinitely too little of the love, grace, compassion, faithfulness, and power of the Hope and Saviour of Israel in the time of trouble. Deeply have we suffered from this, and sometimes cried—

"How shall a heart that doubts like mine,  
Dismayed at every breath,  
Pretend to live the life divine,  
Or fight the fight of faith!"

And doubtless our readers have often felt so too. How cheering, then, to perceive it written of the man after God's own heart, amid one of the most painful of his bitter and frequent trials—

"BUT DAVID ENCOURAGED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD!"

"The Lord his God!" Sweet relationship! Here the Infinite I AM and a poor worm of the earth are seen in holy and indissoluble union. The Omnipotent Jehovah is looked up to and trusted in by a feeble speck of His creation, into which His Spirit has breathed the breath of spiritual life, and made, in a Gospel sense, "a living soul." With David it was a matter of life or death. Creatures failed him at this trying moment. But the God Who had separated him to the saving knowledge of Himself was unchanged. The promises He had spoken with power to His heart were, in this furnace to which he was subjected, to be equally tried and tested; and they were to be proved "pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Ps. xii. 6). Consoling thought! The Lord in trying His children tries HIMSELF. And what is the

result? All the dross is proved to be *theirs*—all the pure metal *His*. His faithfulness endures the hottest fires and the strongest floods.

“ No change of mind our Jesus knows—  
A true and constant Friend ;  
Where once the Lord His love bestows  
He loves unto the end.”

Though most of the Lord's people, it would seem, have to wait long ere they can say, “ The Lord is my God,” there is none who can speak confidently of his state, and assume a rich blessedness of experience, without this sacred confidence. The lack of this casts the dark shadow over their pathway, crooks, crosses, and temptations. And it is too apparent, from the many desponding cries of David, that he was not always in the banqueting house with the banner of love waving in full view over him. But this did not affect the relationship betwixt him and the God of Salvation : and this truth equally holds good of all the doubting members of the one family in earth and heaven named. He Who has said, “ I will be their God, and they shall be My people ” will never revoke His word, but all His acts shall prove His unaltered purpose to abide by it. The two grand outward demonstrations of this are, the mission of Christ and the work of the Spirit, while Divine providence accomplishes all things in furtherance of the decrees of grace. But not to enlarge on this great topic, it should be observed that, as His people's God, He has said they *SHALL KNOW HIS NAME* (Isaiah lii. 6). And what says David of the effect of this knowledge? “ *THEY THAT KNOW THY NAME will put their trust in Thee* : for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee ” (Ps. ix. 10).

See how beautifully this shows that the Lord draws all His children by the work of the Spirit to Himself, their Salvation. Their convictions, exercises, castings-down are all thus overruled to bring them to His feet, while the knowledge of His saving and gracious “ *NAME* ” becomes His “ *SECRET* ” with them, by which they are attracted to plead, trust, and wait for all the help and final deliverance they need, even as “ David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.” Never could he have done so had not the Lord revealed His “ *NAME* ” to him, and favoured him with those distinguishing marks of His favour which often led him to cry in times of necessity, “ Show me a token for good.”

And when, beloved, we review the manifest kindness which has thus far brought us through the appointed number of our trials, and added another year to those years whose sorrows we shall know no more, may we not well "encourage ourselves" in humble hope, if not in triumphant confidence, "in the Lord our God." Personally, we long to attain to a fuller acquaintance with that "love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God." For who that fears the Lord can question the words of the poet—

"How sweet to be allowed to call  
The God Whom heaven adores my Friend!  
To tell my griefs, to tell Him *all*,  
And then to know my prayers ascend."

This only can beget a "confidence toward God" in times when the enemy assails heart and mind, in those peculiar and innumerable ways which his profound knowledge of human nature leads Him to adopt, and which no creature power can withstand or creature skill counteract. For "when he," as the Leviathan, "raiseth up himself the mighty are afraid;" and only "by reason of breakings"—the "breakings" of the force of temptation effected by the Omnipotence of Grace—they, that is, the assailed ones, "purify themselves"—by resorting to the "Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." And this fresh enjoyment of the unchangeable purifying efficacy of the precious blood of Christ, in connection with the everlasting love of the Father, adds to that "experience" which "worketh hope" for all the future, and it is the confirming in us of "the testimony of Christ" (1 Cor. i. 8). It enables us to realise what He is to His believing people, even that which He hath Himself declared, namely, Him who "speaks in righteousness, mighty to save." And with such a holy combination of merit, compassion, and faithfulness to depend upon, all sincere seekers after the Saviour have, on every hand, the most Scriptural reasons to encourage themselves in the Lord their God, and to appeal with David for further displays of His confirming loving-kindness and tender mercy, saying—

"SHOW ME A TOKEN FOR GOOD."

Divine tokens vouchsafed become pledges on the Lord's part, and evidences on the part of His people. His tokens of grace proclaim Him to be their God, and them to be His people. The bow in the

cloud in the day of rain became the visible token of Jehovah's covenant to Noah. Circumcision was the manifest token of that covenant to Abraham. And the Seed of David, Christ the Lord, is the richest token of all of the self-same covenant, into which Jehovah has entered with Himself in His Trinity of Persons on behalf of His elect: insomuch that the Father, addressing the Son, declares, "I will also give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house" (Isaiah xlii. 6, 7).

And can we not say, beloved, that Jesus by His Spirit has sent us forth from the prison-house of nature; that He has loosed the yoke of Satan, under which we served divers lusts and pleasures, and were bringing forth fruit unto death? And what is all this, but a sure token that His "invaluable blood" was shed for us? for only by the blood of His covenant can such a deliverance be effected, and only through its all-prevailing medium does the blessed Spirit work both regenerately and sanctifyingly. When the Psalmist says, "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds" (Psalm cxvi. 16), what is it, but an acknowledgement of that saving work wrought in his soul, to which Paul alludes when he says, "Being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. vi. 22). The soul, Divinely begotten, and plucked from the grasp of Satan, is new-born for Heaven. Never shall it renounce the yoke of Christ for the renewed bondage of "the god of this world."

" Not all the delusions of sin  
 Shall ever seduce him to death;  
 He now has the witness within,  
 United to Jesus by faith.  
 This faith shall eternally fail  
 When Jesus shall fall from His throne,  
 For hell against both must prevail,  
 Since Jesus and he are but one."

To apprehend this by the sealing witness of the Spirit is the chief desire of all who are interested in its blessedness. "Show me a token for good," becomes the personal appeal of each. For as the Lord is jealous of His people, so are they of His love. To see and hear of others favoured to claim Him as their covenant God, and

able to speak of the Lord's love-visits, whispers, and secret bestowment of sovereign favour, and to be left destitute of all these vital privileges, is not to be endured without complaint by any who have "passed from death unto life." It begets a holy coveting of these best gifts. We trace the feeling in the Spouse when she says, "Tell me, O Thou Whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of Thy companions?" To know nothing of desire for the presence of Christ, the kisses of His mouth (in the heart-spoken promises and assurances of His love); to be content with a profession that has no tender feeling in it, but rests entirely in the creature, is no mark of Zion's Heaven-born children. A felt death, darkness, and subjection to vanity often indeed prevail for a season, but they never reign permanently in a true believer. Legal elements and carnal frames, attended with mistrust of the Lord, and total want of access at His throne, all the Lord's people have not seldom to suffer from. But they are taught by the thorns and briars of the wilderness that without Christ they can do nothing; that the Lord has not given them a foot of Moab's or Edom's land for their inheritance (Deut. ii. 5, 9). No; all praises to His Name! Himself is His people's part and their inheritance, as the spiritual tribe of Levi, the kingdom of priests (Num. xviii. 20).

And what mercy is in this! Without this arrangement of infinite love we should, in spiritual matters, settle on the lees of a dead profession, and in worldly matters, amid the cares of life and the deceitfulness of riches, we should lightly esteem the Rock of our salvation. Hence the Holy Spirit is from time to time stirring us up, as an eagle stirreth up her nest, and by the pressure of many and diverse circumstances, and the arising of divers events, He is pleased to bring us to thirst, aspire, and cry after the Lord's incomparable "tokens for good:" as did Zion when she exclaimed, "Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for Thee." And to show the personal feeling of all her quickened offspring, the *plural* is immediately changed to the *singular*, and it follows: "With *my* soul have I desired Thee in the night, and with *my* spirit within *me* will *I* seek Thee early" (Isaiah xxvi. 8, 9).

It is thus on the eve of the New Year we stand with our editorial and ministerial work before us, and with our exercises, hopes,

and fears about us, and looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, we cry, "SHOW ME A TOKEN FOR GOOD." Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it" (Psalm xc. 16, 17). Fain would we so clearly perceive His wisdom and love in all His dealings with us, and be so persuaded that all things shall work together for our good, that in all our ways we may acknowledge Him, and behold Him directing our paths: even as our beloved poet says—

" May we all our wills resign,  
Quite absorbed and lost in Thine;  
Make us walk by Thy right rules;  
Lord, direct us—we are fools."

And seeing that from Eternity Jehovah has planned and ordered everything in Grace and Providence relative to His people's salvation, and amply provided for all their needs in their pathway, though by the most mysterious ways and means, can there be anything more consistent than to submit our choice and judgment in all things to Him, saying, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Psalm lxxiii. 24).

But O what Grace is needed to accomplish this subjection of self to Him! Satan, the accursed slanderer—as his name, Devil, implies—is ever ready to suggest that it can only be wrought by a blast coming upon everything we hold dear. This is a gross calumny on the character and dealings of the God of everlasting love. It is true He doth often *severely* try the righteous; but so impossible is it to define many of His dispensations in their operation on individuals that to attribute them to any *human* cause is to widely err from the mark. Of this we may be assured: He will be King; He will ever hold the reins of government; His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. Therefore may it be our privilege, by the Spirit's grace, to be daily crying, if spared through the year, "Show me a token for good," and doubtless the promise will be ratified in our experience, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Brethren and sisters in the Lord, may the grace of our Beloved rest richly upon us all.

THE EDITOR.

---

## A NEW YEAR'S THANKSGIVING.

"Now in a song of grateful praise  
To my dear Lord my voice I'll raise;  
With all His saints I'll join to tell  
My Jesus has done all things well."

**LET** **US** say this be the language of many of the Lord's children on this New Year's morn, 1882,—a song of praise ascending from their hearts to Him Who hath called them by His grace, and revealed unto them the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour—they being brought to believe that, "as far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed *their* transgressions from *them*," and that being clothed in the all-perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, they appear in the sight of the Father all fair, without spot or wrinkle—comely through that comeliness which He hath put upon them.

"A sinner clothed in this rich vest,  
And garments washed in blood.  
Is rendered fit with Christ to feast,  
And be the guest of God."

Oh, what can compare with a good hope in these rich blessings; to know that for time and for eternity it must be well with us; being one of that happy number chosen in the Lord Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, to be "an heir of God through Christ."

How trivial do all the things of time and sense appear in comparison with these stupendous blessings! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name." "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

But with some of God's children their harps may be hung upon the willows; and in reading the above they will be ready to exclaim, "How shall we sing the Lord's song?" With such I would most feelingly sympathise, well knowing the bitterness of soul which is experienced when the Sun of righteousness withdraws His bright shining, and we are called to do business in deep waters. At such a time we are tempted to say, "Is His mercy clean gone for ever, and will He be favourable no more?" But, blessed be His name, He is ever faithful to His word, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice."

Therefore, I would say to such, Encourage yourselves in the Lord your God, pour out your hearts before Him, tell Him all your complaints; wait upon Him, and hear what He will say unto you. It may be that He has some precious word in store for you this New Year's Day, and that He but delays to make you importunate. His exhortation is: "Let Me see thy countenance; let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." But alas!

how apt we are to be slothful in prayer ; to be contented with walking at a distance from God ; and when aroused from our sleepy state, and we rise to open to our Beloved, we find He is gone. "I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn Himself and was gone ; I sought Him, but could not find Him ; I called Him, but He gave me no answer." May we in such a time of trial seek the Lord earnestly, confessing our manifold iniquities, and beseeching Him to grant us a fresh application of His pardoning love ; to arise for our help, and enable us again to rejoice in Him, as our all in all, and in the language of the spouse to exclaim, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His."

My brothers and sisters in the Lord, will you bear a word of exhortation ? Be diligent ; be vigilant. "The diligent soul shall be made fat." "Be sober, be vigilant ; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." Do not be satisfied with what you have already attained, but seek earnestly after great and still greater things. If we have any pursuit in which we wish to excel, or any art or science we desire perfectly to comprehend, are we not very diligent in the use of all means to attain these ends ?—not simply devote one day in the week and an infinitesimal portion of the others to the study of it. But, alas ! how small a portion of time do we devote to the contemplation of high and heavenly things, to the reading of the Word and good books ; to Christian communion, conversation and prayer with one another ; and to the worship of God either in public or private. How then can we expect to go on our way rejoicing in Him Who "loved us and gave Himself for us," if we do not cultivate acquaintance with Him ; or to walk in that peace "which passeth all understanding," if not led to seek a growth in grace and in the knowledge of Him Whose legacy was, "*in Me peace.*"

Oh, that it may please the Lord so to blow upon His garden this first day of another year, that the spices may flow out abundantly ; and we wrest a blessing from God for the ensuing year.

"He loves our importunity,  
And makes our cause His care."

Is there not cause in looking back upon our pathway thus far for each one of us to testify,

"My Jesus has done all things well ?"

It may have been through fire and flood, through sunshine and storm, through prosperity and adversity, through sickness, sorrow, and suffering, much rejoicing in God and deep temptations : but in the midst of all, to the honour of Him, we must acknowledge He has sweetly sustained, comforted, and blessed, revealing Him-



self unto us as a Brother born for adversity; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,—as our compassionate and faithful High Priest,—

“Whose love is as large as His power,  
And neither knows measure nor end.”

Truly the Lord our God has been with us, and overruled all things for our spiritual good,—teaching us and disciplining us by the exercises, afflictions, and trials which have more or less been our daily portion, and so graciously sanctifying all unto us, that again and again we have had to testify to His love, faithfulness, and unchangeableness. And we have blessed and praised our good and gracious God for those very sorrows and trials which to nature seemed agonizing and overwhelming; for in those deeps we have so proved the mysteries and infinite depth of His love, and the preciousness of a dear Redeemer in His office-characters, that we have been amazed at His condescension thus to reveal Himself to sinners such as we. O that our too-frequently cold hearts may be warmed to offer praise and thanksgiving to Him for His marvellous loving-kindness towards us.

True rejoicing in the Lord is compatible with deep mourning on account of sin, sorrows, afflictions, bereavements, or trials of any kind. We may be pressed down heavily with our burdens, and yet through the tender, loving-kindness and faithfulness of God prove

“There’s something secret sweetens all.”

“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;” and O it is blessed to understand this secret experimentally. May our eyes be “ever toward the Lord” in our onward path, and we continually wait upon Him for the leadings and teachings of His Spirit; for grace to help in every time of need; leaning on Him for wisdom, strength, and all that we require, to resist our numerous enemies from within and without. May He grant us earnestness and diligence to follow the Lord *fully*,—not at a distance, and with full purpose of heart to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

It is not revealed to us what may lie before us in the future, but the blessing is that we “know in Whom *we* have believed,” and that “He is able to keep that which *we* have committed to Him against that day.” And we would earnestly crave of Him the abundant outpouring of His Spirit, that we may be enabled to live more fully to His honour and glory, be made an increasing blessing to all around, and by our walk and conversation at all times show there is a reality in the things we profess, and that it is our meat and drink to do the will of Him Who has taught us by His Spirit, and has drawn us to Himself, and so filled us with love to Him, that we long to spend and be spent in His service.

Our greatest trouble is *sin*—that sin which cleaves unto us and mixes with and mars all that we do or think or say. But, blessed be God, His gracious promise is, that we shall “be more than conquerors” through the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him we desire to commit all His blood-bought family, blessing Him for His unspeakable goodness in past years, and begging Him to grant us an increasing realisation of His love and faithfulness day by day throughout 1882; that our wills may be absorbed in His; “the joy of the Lord be our strength,” and we ever remember the exhortation: “Be not high-minded, but fear.”

Thus may we be enabled to walk humbly, throughout 1882, with Him who has revealed Himself unto us as our God, and daily prove the sweetness of being in the spirit of the following lines:

“All that feeds my busy pride,  
Cast it evermore aside;  
Bid my will to Thine submit,  
Lay me humbly at Thy feet.  
Make me like a little child,  
Of my strength and wisdom spoilt.  
Seeing only in Thy light,  
Walking only in Thy might.”

And to His name shall be all the praise and glory. Amen and amen.

*Camb.*

*IOTA.*


---

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON, PREACHED AT REGENT STREET CHAPEL, CITY ROAD, LONDON, ON LORD'S DAY EVENING, MARCH 9TH, 1845.

BY MR. GEORGE ABRAHAMS.

*“But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth: and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.”—John x. 2, 3.*

 ANY months have elapsed since the Lord led me to this precious portion of His word. It was on a Lord's day morning in the last year, and, as far as I can remember, I did not go through half of it. How it came to pass that it did not come into my mind again till this day, I cannot tell, any more than that God is a sovereign, and I am satisfied that through many temptations and hurricanes His promise stands good, that His word shall not return unto Him void. To believe of a servant of God that he is guided and directed by God, is a very marvellous thing; and I believe there is little or no comfort or peace to any one, who does not know whom he is hearing, how he is hearing, and taking heed to what he is hearing. Those who go after every ‘Lo here’ and ‘Lo there,’ I defy them to tell me three months out of the year whom they are hearing, how

they are hearing, or what they are hearing. The word "but," in the beginning of my text, makes it manifest, and I am bound to say so. The "but" makes the difference: "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."

This portion of the word, then, a little more minutely let us examine, in which we

First, Take notice of the Good Shepherd speaking in the text.

Secondly, What is meant by the door.

Thirdly, What is meant by the porter that openeth.

Fourthly, The glorious office of the Good Shepherd, that calleth His sheep, and that by name, and leadeth them out. "He leadeth them from strength to strength, till every one of them appeareth before God."

Fifthly, It is necessary we should make a solemn inquiry, what evidence we have that we are of the Good Shepherd's flock, and that we do belong to Christ. This is, as far as I can remember, the way and manner in which the Lord led me into this portion, when I preached from it on a Lord's day morning.

First, As regards the Good Shepherd, I have just to speak as the dear Lord may lead me; for to be candid, I have no more recollection of any particular sentence in my former sermon, than you have who never heard it before. Well then, say some, there is no particular occasion for you to mention that you have spoken from it before. I do not know about that. Some of you might say, Oh, we heard it before. But not to linger, How is this Good Shepherd to be known? I kept on pulling and trying and crying this afternoon—some of you know what I mean; Well, then, says the dear Lord, tell them there are three prominent features: I am good, as I said to the young man, "Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but one, that is God;" and the poor man looked on Me simply as man, as many heretics do at this day. Tell them I am good in My person. He declares that He is the essential Son of God, the great Jehovah, as some of you heard last Thursday night. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He is essentially good; all that is good comes from Him, the fountain of all good and blessing. Thus the person of our Shepherd is very good. Tell them, secondly, says He, that I am good in My nature and office: for who else can be declared to be good, in the sense in which God declared everything to be good at the creation. God looked on all that He had made, and pronounced it to be very good; and there has not been one single being of us, since the days of death and destruction brought into the world by Adam's sin, that he has had any such name belonging to him. "There is none good, no not one." Why? Because of sin.

"Sin's within us, all about us."

"We are born in sin, and shapen in iniquity." And the dear souls taught of God, would tremble at the thought of being called good, as standing in themselves. But here was a human nature, "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and in this human nature He is "voice," "door," and all to his people. His nature is good, and there is nothing good but what is joined to it by a mystical bond of union. And as He is essentially good in His human nature, by which in all His offices He is manifested to the church; so He is good in His divine nature. Well, I said, Lord, that will do. And He said, Tell them, in the third place, that I am good, and *the* Good Shepherd emphatically, in love, condescension and kindness to My flock; for no shepherd loves his flock to such a degree, as to lay down his life for his sheep. Thus then a few words concerning the Good Shepherd.

My second general heading is, The door: "But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep." Not only that He is this glorious divine Shepherd of the sheep. And the way that He is made manifest as such, is by His entering in by the door. My enquiry then is, What is meant by the door? The first verse of my chapter says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." The door is explained in the portion of God's word before us; that is, so far as scripture explanation goes. Scripture explanations are of this kind, that after the Holy Ghost has explained what goes before, there remaineth a great and mighty depth in the explanation. In the seventh verse the dear Lord says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep:" all that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Thus the dear Lord says, "I am the door;" therefore doth not a mighty riddle remain: He is Himself the door, and yet He entereth by the door. Thieves and robbers do not enter by the door, but climb up some other way. Many, very many conjectures have been made of this door. A door is the way into the building. It is written in the Word of God (and you will find it is applied to Christ Himself), in the fifth chapter of Hebrews: "For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way," &c. "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." "He that is called of God:" he must have a call from God; he must be ordained of God, be appointed of God. "So also Christ, glorified not Himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee."

Now as regards this door, it is the Divine ordination of the Lord God, Who is a sovereign in all His ways. Thieves and robbers are not ordained to go in by the door, but climb up some other way. They have no ordination, no charge. "He that entereth in by the door, is the Shepherd of the sheep." Christ came as ordained by God the Father to be the Great Shepherd of the flock; for it is written in Isaiah xl., "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd." Many portions of God's Word in the Old Testament, in Ezekiel especially, are applied to Christ as ordained by God the Father to be the Shepherd of His people; and in Isaiah, as I have quoted: "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." And hence He repeated, times without number, in the days of His humility on earth, that He came not to do His Own will, but the will of His Father who sent Him. He sought not His own will: therefore whoever the man is, whatever his motives are for being a minister, if not the glory of God, he is climbing up over the wall: neither am I ashamed to say it, nor am I singular in doing so. Whatever is made great things of, or made an idol of, that is to be spoken against by the servants of God. What a mighty talk is made of ordination and succession. That great servant of God, Calvin, says, Vocation is indispensable, but ordination is only secondary. Vocation, is to be called by Jehovah Himself; and this is the only door by which a man goes in rightly. Christ was not to be left singular in this work of keeping of sheep, but to have a number of servants, summed up in the Revelations as the four beasts, or living creatures, in the four quarters of the earth, and they shall stand till time shall be no more.

But I think there is something deeper in this door still; for it regards the door of the ordination of God. For though He is so full of compassion and gentleness, yet He will at the end make it manifest who are His servants, and who serve Him not. And though some may go on for a long time, without its being known whether they have entered in by the door or no; yet by the Lord's people I think they might really be detected before six months. The door into the sheep-fold is of the same materials as the sheep-fold—Christ in human nature. By this nature He has access to them, and they to Him; this makes up the grand access into the sheep-fold, for, as the poet says.

"God out of Christ is terror to my soul."

This door is the glorious incarnate love of Christ, by which there is a way to God; and until you see this door, your soul must sink within you under the terrors of God's law.

*(To be continued).*

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## A SONG FOR ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

## THE WEAKNESS WHICH EVER PREVAILS.

"And he halted upon his thigh."—Gen. xxxii. 31.

"My strength is made perfect in weakness."—2 Cor. xii. 9.

"Out of weakness were made strong."—Heb. xi. 34.

If thou hast met God's angel fair,  
'Mid clouds of darkest night;  
If thou hast wept and wrestled there,  
And He has brought thee light;  
Then, with the light that bringeth all,  
His love has made thy pride to fall,  
And though thy heart is strong and free,  
Yet thou hast learnt this mystery,  
That strength in weakness lives.

If thou hast been where tempests hail,  
And threatening storms oft lour,  
Hast known the anvil and the flail,  
Stood in temptation's hour;  
If through the darkness thou hast wept,  
The beetling path of truth hast kept;  
If in the night, through listening ear,  
The words of Love have brought thee cheer,  
Then thou didst stoop to win.

If now, where'er thy steps may tend,  
Thy faith beholds a well-known form,  
And by thy side thou hast a friend,  
The Angel of the storm;  
Then He who gave victorious grace,  
That crown upon thy head to place,

Hath kill'd thy own strength in the strife,

And given thee His Own regal life,  
In which thy faith doth live.

And thus, although a Prince with God,  
Self cannot lift its head;  
For thou hast pass'd beneath the rod,  
And thine own life is dead.

And though a crown is on thy brow,  
The Hand which gave it laid thee low,  
And He, Who raised thee from the ground,  
Through thy own victory gave a wound  
In which thy strength hath root.

A strength, the birth of sorrow's night,  
Fair child of many woes,  
That throws itself on God's own might  
And thus subdues its foes;  
O weakness! last born, yet most true,  
Each foe without, within subdue,  
True source of strength, and only known

To those who win and wear a crown;  
All heaven shall yet be thine.

W. P. B.

Brighton.

## CONTRASTS AND PARALLELS.

## No. 2.

## THE TRIPLE BLESSING

## AND THE THRICE-REPEATED SALUTATION.

Numbers vi. 24-26 :—John xx. 19, 21, 26.



HEN the sin-offering, burnt-offering and peace-offering had been duly presented before the Lord, it devolved upon Aaron and his sons to bless the people with uplifted hands, saying, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." The curse had been symbolically removed by the blood of the victims presented upon the altar, and no impediment remained to the pronouncing of the triple blessing. The majesty of the Father's law had been typically honoured by the majesty of the

Son's offering, and the majesty of the Spirit's witness was equally attested.

The Father would now in His faithfulness and justice "BLESS" with full and free remission, 1 John i. 9; and "KEEP" through His Own name the blood-redeemed Israel of His love, John xvii. 11. The Son, as the Sun of Righteousness, would arise with healing in His wings, and "MAKE HIS FACE SHINE UPON" those whom He had redeemed from the power of darkness and the shadow of death, Mal. iv. 2; and "BE GRACIOUS" to them amid all their unworthiness, sorrows and temptations in this wilderness. The Holy Spirit would "LIFT UP HIS COUNTENANCE" upon them, in removing the veil of unbelief and error, and enlightening the eyes of their understanding, as the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, Eph. i. 17; and "GIVE THEM PEACE" in believing the record God has given of His Son, and by applying the atonement and appropriating the righteousness of Christ.

Nor shall any of the individual members of the Church of God fail to share in this blessing. It was pronounced on Israel *as a whole*—"The Lord bless THEE," &c. If analysed with eyes anointed with the holy eye-salve, it will be found to include every mercy and favour, in spiritual and temporal concerns, which the Lord's people need in order to their realization of salvation, and their preservation, and glorification. And their rich inheritance is found to be a legacy of "PEACE." And if, as it is affirmed, it was on the eighth day of the week that the priests thus blessed the people, it corresponds with the day of the Saviour's resurrection, and His successive appearances to His assembled disciples. And if the peace-offering was the last of the three presented, previous to the blessing being spoken, it adds a force to that precious announcement, which wound up with the gift of peace.

This one thing is clear: Jehovah emphatically empowered His priests to make known His "thoughts of peace, and not of evil," as manifested through an accepted sacrifice. And each of the Divine Persons was exhibited as joyfully participating in the bestowment of favour. For in the Name of the Triune Jehovah, in mystery, the triple benediction was uttered, and its comprehensive, but full nature, embraced "PEACE" as its glorious end. For this was the gracious design of the great Antitype's office, mission and work; even of Him, Who "is our PEACE." But not with "the blood of goats and calves, but by His OWN blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. ix. 12.

In Gethsemane, before Pilate's bar, and on Calvary His "precious blood" had been presented before God, even before He ascended within the veil. And as the risen Christ, Who had proved His

acceptance with the Father, He most kindly deigned to proclaim, to those who loved Him, that "PEACE" which He had made "by the blood of His cross;" and this in the benediction-salutation: "PEACE be unto you."

It was on the first day of the week, when the disciples were assembled with closed doors, for fear of the Jews, that He, Who had swallowed up death in victory as "the Prince of peace," "stood in their midst," when He so lovingly greeted them. The salutation, with His personal appearance, was for the confirmation of their faith, and as a balm to their perplexed and troubled hearts. It was the inauguration of that "government and peace," of the increase of which there is to be "no end." As their High Priest He had made the atonement, and had come forth to bless His people with *peace*—the fruit of all His sore travail. And here we recognize the parallel between Him and the high priest after His work was completed—although, in the fullest sense, it is consummated in the mission of the Spirit from within the vail, where the Saviour is enthroned with the Father on the blood-besprinkled mercy-seat.

On each of the three occasions when the Lord Jesus appeared and said, "Peace be unto you," it was to the disciples as assembled *in a body*; just as the High Priest pronounced His blessing on the people *as a whole*. John xx. 19, 21, 26. There is much sweetness in this. It shows the unity of the members as one body in Christ; and that "peace" is "ordained" for each and all, Isa. xxvi. 12. Nor can we believe otherwise than that "PEACE" from the Father's love, the Son's atonement, and the Spirit's grace, was signified by the Redeemer in His triple utterance of the sacred words; and that thus they became the substance, after the offering of His Own body, of all that the High Priest's blessing contained, when he put Jehovah's name upon His Israel, and ended His blessing with "peace."

And thus in this parallel, which is here so briefly touched upon, we find "peace," extended like a river in promise to the tried and troubled members of the Saviour's body. In the world, tribulation is appointed to be, in measure, their common lot; but it is only to make the "peace" in their Beloved all the richer and sweeter when revealed. Peace follows the blood shed and presented to the Father, as the grand testimony to the validity of the sacrifice of Christ, and no conscience is too burdened, no heart too hard, no conflicts too distracting for this Peace to prevail over. Peace in Christ; peace in the conscience, and peace in heaven, is the lot of the thrice-blessed Israel of God.

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### “WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO?”

**T**HE writer of this little tract was a short time since travelling in a train, when (on arriving at a Junction) one of the company's servants requested the passengers to produce their tickets. One man, however, was unable to do so; when a sharp altercation took place. The servant in the employ of the company demanded to know “where the man was going to,” when the poor fellow confessed he “did not know.” The porter then called for assistance, by saying there was a man travelling in that carriage who declared he “did not know where he was going to!” How the matter was settled I know not, as the train soon moved on. This circumstance forced itself upon my consideration; while my heart ejaculated that probably there might be others in the same train who were travelling to the most important of all termini without any official ticket; and more than that, like this poor man, not really knowing where they were going to! and what is still worse, not caring either! I hope my reader is not such an one. It is however certain we shall all soon reach our goal; but under what circumstances is alone known to Him, “in Whom we live, move, and have our being.” And He has certainly laid down in His word many plain waymarks, whereby we may know whether we are upon the *broad* rails of “the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life” which “lead to destruction;” or upon the narrow, Christ-seeking, truth-loving, flesh-denying way, which leadeth to eternal life. Let us, therefore, in all honesty to our precious souls, search and try ourselves by the word of God (the balances of the sanctuary), to see how matters stand between God and us; lest coming suddenly to the terminus of our earthly journey, we should be found like the poor man referred to, without a ticket; and although it may be we have lived long, yet have never been earnestly concerned to know *where we are going* to when we depart hence to be seen no more.

This is the more important as we are informed, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov. xiv. 12.) It is remarkable to notice how particular most persons are when they travel by rail to see that they are in time, and that they procure a properly signed official ticket; and these precautions are adhered to even in short journeys; hence, how careful they are lest they should not be put down at the right station! How strange it seems, and yet how true it is, that we should be so careful over small matters and yet be wholly careless and unconcerned as to what shall become of us when we come to die! It was this which made Moses say of Israel, “O that they were wise; that they un-

derstood this; that they would consider their latter end." (Deut. xxxii. 29.) Alas! for man while in his natural state! He is being "led captive by the devil at his will," allured by all the pleasing infatuations of sin under the powerful influence of the god of this world; and he "loves darkness rather than light because his deeds are evil." To all such, the scriptures proclaim (as with a trumpet-tongue) from Genesis to Revelation, "The wages of sin is death!" To all such, we say sorrowfully and kindly, "You are in the wrong train, my friends, you are on the wrong rails! You have no true ticket! You have not considered 'where you are going to!' so that if the train stops *suddenly* at the end of your journey it will land you in darkness, in gloom, in perdition!" One poet in his writings interrogated himself as follows, and you may do the same:—

Pause, my soul, and ask the question,  
 Art thou ready to meet God?  
 Am I made a real Christian;  
 Washed in the Redeemer's blood?  
 Have I union to the Church's living Head?

When Moses was journeying from Egypt to the promised land, he said (in Numbers x. 29) "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, 'I will give it you,' Come with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Hence, it was clear, he "knew where he was going to; for he was led out of Egypt with his people by God's own hand and power. He was not like the man in the train who *did not know* where he was going to. And here we add, with regard to all whom the Lord calls by His grace, that they are led earnestly to seek to know the way of salvation; nor can they ever rest satisfied till they know they are in the narrow way which leadeth to eternal life. They must know for themselves that they possess the right ticket: as the beloved John said, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John v. 10). And as Paul said (in Rom. viii. 9), "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." They must know *where* they are going to, for they would not live and die in the dark for ten thousand worlds! In Heb. xi. 13, Paul calls all such "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country:" they desire "a better country (than this earth) that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city." And it is clear that God prepares all such for this heavenly city: hence Paul said (in Col. i. 12, 13, 14), "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. In Whom we have redemp-

tion through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Peter declared such to be "begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

And now, dear Reader, we ask, Do you know where you are going to when you die? Or are you wholly unconcerned about it? Remember, "the redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." (Ps. xlix. 8). Or if you really do desire to be remembered with the favour the Lord bears to His people—if the cry of your heart is, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation," then be of good courage, for the Lord will in no wise cast you out. He filleth the hungry with the good things of salvation, but the rich, and God-despising, He will send empty away. To all who seek Him He saith, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa i. 18.) Such will never die without their ticket: they will never die in the dark: they shall "know where they are going to:" for they are "in the way" and "the way is in them"—even Jesus: for "He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" and all who "live" and "die" in the Lord will soon appear for ever in Eternal Glory with Him. (1 Thes. iv. 14.) Hence it is written: "Mark the perfect (in Christ) and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Paul said, he "knew Whom he had believed, and was persuaded that He (Christ) was able to keep that which he had committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. i. 12); while in the 4th chap. 6, 7, 8 verses, he adds: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing." And again, in *certain prospect* of Eternal Glory he said (in Phil. i. 23): "For I am in a strait betwixt two; having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." Surely this clearly proved that Paul "knew where he was going to!" So also Job knew that his "Redeemer lived," and although "worms might destroy his body," yet in his redeemed and resurrection flesh he knew that he should see God; and for *himself*, and not another. He knew "were he was going to." And all who possess the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit know (more or less) where they are going to; or (to say the least) they all earnestly long for the Spirit's witness *within*; while those who in faith are enabled to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His," know they have their tickets signed and sealed with the blood of the Lamb! and that "whether they wake

or sleep they are the Lord's." Reader! may this be our happy portion; for then, unlike the man in the train, we *shall know where we are going to*; and shall not be taken by surprise when called upon to give up our ticket!


*Salem, Tunbridge Wells.*

T. EDWARDS.

## FORGIVENESS.

### A CHRISTIAN OBLIGATION.

Dear Mr. Editor,

T is truly blessed to "delight in the law of the Lord," and to "meditate" therein "day and night" (Psalm i. 2). Souls thus favoured often receive sweet instruction from Him whose "lips, like lilies, drop sweet-smelling myrrh" (Songs v. 13). Such happy souls are no strangers to that holy familiarity with the Truth, as expressed in Prov. vi. 22: "When thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou wakest it shall talk with thee."

Having been favoured a short time since with one of those *timely* instructive seasons, wherein the words of the Heavenly Teacher produce a most abiding impression, I venture to request a little space in the *Gospel Advocate*, that the attention of your readers may be called to that all-important parable of our Lord as recorded in Matt. xviii. 21-35. Replying to Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him; till seven times?" the Lord gave this astonishing answer: "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." He then spake this parable, likening the gospel dispensation to "a certain King which would take account of his servants." From this we learn that Christ will not suffer lawlessness in His kingdom; all shall own His authority, and yield obedience to His laws. "And when he had begun to reckon," one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents; but when brought to repentance, his lord forgave him all that debt. Then follows a very humbling revelation of what is in man; for the same man, whom his Lord had freely forgiven a debt amounting to nearly two millions, went out and found a fellow servant who owed him a debt of about three pounds. Did he deal with his fellow servant as his lord had just dealt with him? No; but quite the reverse, for "he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest," and went and cast him into prison. His fellow servants seeing this were very sorry, and wisely went and told unto their Lord all that was done. Nor did they tell their Lord in vain, for his Lord soon called him to his bar, calling him a wicked servant, denounced his cruel conduct, and delivered him to

the tormentors. And then the Lord makes application of the whole to his disciples, thus: "So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you; if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses."

Is there nothing here to cause the closest self examination? rather, we may well say with Jeremiah, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens." Finally, in honour of our adorable Lord, let us ever remember what is recorded of Him: "For such an high priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," Whose gracious words are these: "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick, but I will destroy the fat and the strong, I will feed them with judgment." (Ezekiel xxxiv. 16.)

SHEMAIAH.

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR AGE.

### I.—GENERAL DISTRACTION.

**H**ERE may be some favoured nooks and corners in obscure villages, so free from the innovations occasioned by the changing and conflicting spirit of our times, as to be almost unconscious of their existence. Occasionally a newspaper or news-magazine may fall into the hands of the plain and simple-hearted folks, and excite their wonder or their apprehension; but the unbroken calm that surrounds them soon dispels the feeling, and they relapse into their wonted quietude. Day after day passes without any stirring events, except what may arise in the humble domestic circle, or in the squire's house or the parsonage. Their wants are but few, and are easily supplied. The squalid misery of London poverty is unknown, and general health and moderate contentment prevail.

Yet even in rural village districts such a tranquil condition of affairs is now a rare exception. The adjacent railway station, or its lines spanning the fields; the rapidly passing trains, and the postal telegraph flashing its momentous intelligence, have invaded the quietude, and broken in upon all the old-fashioned ideas. The nearest market town has become a centre of importance and news unknown fifty years ago, and farmers and tradesmen, and those they employ, feel most sensibly they have alighted upon different times to those of their forefathers.

And what shall we say of our large towns, and, above all, the great metropolis with its four millions of inhabitants? What is constantly transpiring here we may well compare to what is

beheld in a spinning and weaving manufactory : where the intricate machinery, worked by steam power, is in full operation, the wheels revolving, the bands flying around, the threads passing through mysterious apertures, and all combining to utterly bewilder the uninitiated looker-on. All appears a wild chaos, while the whirring sounds, accompanied by the monotonous but measured strokes of the piston-rod, render the place a Babel. The massing of individuals together, and the marvellously increased facilities for producing our various kinds of manufactured articles involves all this confused noise, while the immense vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the public thoroughfares overwhelms the mind of the countryman with a consciousness of his ignorance, while the citizen is absorbed in the rush of affairs.

It was "when men began to multiply upon the face of the earth" that "the earth was filled with violence," Gen. vi. 1, 13. The increase of the human race has always been attended with an increase of "corruption:" for "evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. xv. 33. If "one sinner destroyeth much good" (Ecc. ix. 19), what must be the effect when thousands follow his pernicious ways? Men cannot be banded together in any worldly association without the effect of that association being felt. In the army and navy, the contamination effected by a few depraved individuals is generally admitted to be great. It is the same in the manufactory, the workshop, and every kind of establishment, and it is not confined to sex. Women corrupt women, as men do men; and when the sexes mingle, as in many of our midland and northern towns, the vice existing is proverbial.

The vast increase of the human race just previous to the flood which Jehovah brought "upon the world of the ungodly," every believer may well expect to see paralleled in the state of the population of the globe at the time of Christ's second advent. For, "as the days of Noah were, so shall the Son of man be," Matt. xxiv. 37. The vastness of the multitude involves an immense struggle for the necessities of life, and the enjoyment of its superabounding carnal and unhallowed pleasures. And these two efforts produce the worldly "DISTRACTION" now so prevalent. In every department of trade and commerce men are engaged in fiercely competing with, and out-bidding and under-cutting one another, so that godly, honest men often find it hard work to obtain the bread that perishes, and to "maintain a conscience void of offence toward both God and man." And never did "Vanity Fair" do a greater trade. Its flaming placards, with the bold announcements of its pleasure wares, in a thousand glittering forms meet the eye on every hand, proclaiming "the madness of folly," and that "vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Thus between the incessant


toil for a respectable subsistence, and the constant clamour for so-called relaxation, in the ever-changing forms and colours of this chameleon world's devices to ensnare those who "go right on their way," the hearts and minds of this earth's benighted children are daily DISTRACTED.

To this may be added the discordant strife of political parties, in the midst of which men are apt to overlook the Lord as "the Governor among the nations," and as doing according to His will among the inhabitants of the earth. As a portion of those inhabitants, it is next to impossible for most of the Lord's people, in the various positions they occupy, to be free from political bias, but too much absorption in the spirit—and who but the Lord can regulate the extent?—only serves to the production of leanness of soul and *distraction* from better things; for it is at variance with the tenor of the words: "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth." And when we yet further add the superabounding of all sorts of literature of the most fascinating character, how is the *distraction* intensified by its means. Not to speak of the widespread catering to the depraved passions of human nature, the appeals made to the intellect, and the stupendous efforts to attract the senses, together with the flood of error poured forth, all combine to waste most of that little portion of precious time, reserved from the business cares of life, and to lead away from the Scriptures and Divine meditation into the wilderness of scepticism or miserable carnality.

Nor these alone. For in the abounding profession of this evil day what *distraction* is found. The pulpit bells ring a hundred different changes. High, Low, Broad, Evangelical, in the Establishment, and Rationalism, Deism, Arminianism, and scores of other principles among Dissenters, serve to keep up the devil's changing peals. Men who are strangers to that "anointing, which is truth, and no lie," and which infallibly leads and keeps the true pilgrim in the right path, looking unto Jesus—men, who are guided only by a natural intellect and revile the faith which is of the operation of God, see little to choose between one set of doctrines or another. All, if they but *mean* well, are, say they, to be judged as equally right and acceptable with their Maker.

The *distraction* produced by Satan's bell-ringers is as if a half-dozen bands of loud musicians were performing different pieces together in one building. The confusion is perfect. Who is to know and decide which plays the most in accordance with the laws of harmony? Universal charity is called upon to act as umpire, and his decision is that of the "Ancient Mariner"—

"He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;



For the dear God Who loveth us,  
He made and loveth ALL."

And so they "wrap up" a lie in their bosom, and deceive their souls with a notion of the indiscriminating love of God, and the non-necessity for the atonement of Christ. To this Popery owes its great success. To this Infidelity is equally indebted. It is the combined bands of hell who are playing these dissonant strains, the great theme and design of all being *DISTRACTION*.

And how often does the child of God amid all this feel the need of being kept by the power of God the Spirit unto salvation. And as he from time to time realises this keeping power, how can he sufficiently adore the beloved Redeemer's forethought and prayer: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine Own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are?" John xvii. 11. And again: "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil," ver. 15. No; the providence of their covenant God—in the secret of which the Son of God equally shares with the Father, He being appointed to loose the seven seals of its sacred book—that Providence has not willed it that the wheat should grow unintermixed with the tares, but rather to intermingle "until the harvest," Matt. xiii. 30. In the workshop and market, in society and in the sanctuary, the righteous and the wicked meet together, and great is the trial it often brings upon the former. But the Keeper of Israel, the faithful Shepherd of His sheep, will never forsake the work of His Own hands: and "greater is He (the Holy Spirit) that is in them, than he (Satan) that is in the world," 1 John iv. 4. The very *distraction* which the Lord's people encounter in their daily intercourse with the ungodly, and when deprived of the means of grace in isolated spots, is all overruled by the Spirit to bring them to the feet of Christ, Who is their Peace, that in Him they may possess that peace, and be of good cheer, feeling persuaded that "He has overcome the world," and that

"Christ, Who conquered *for* us once,  
Shall *in* us conquer too."

THE EDITOR.

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Oh, how sweet a thing were it for us to learn to make our burdens light, by framing our hearts to the burden, and making our Lord's will a law.  
*Rutherford.*

**VAIN REGRETS.**—Our life is determined for us, and it makes the mind very free if we give up wishing, and only think of bearing what is laid upon us, and doing what is given to do.



## PERSONAL LETTERS TO EDITOR.

## THE PATH OF TRIBULATION.

November 22nd, 1881.

DEAR SIR,—I scarcely know how to put my thoughts into words in writing to you, yet I cannot refrain altogether. I thought I should like you to know a little more of the state of my mind. I have not forgotten your last visit to L\*\*\*. I was far from well when I went, and it rained most part of the way. I think I caught cold. I was inclined to turn back, as I hardly knew how to make head against it. A thought struck me: it is not enough to be "Pliable;" he that endureth to the end shall be saved. On I went with a "Who can tell?" One look from the Lord will cheer my heart. On reaching the chapel I felt such a gloom come over me. I thought no one in the chapel felt as I did. Such depressing and desponding feelings. I sank in the deep mire, where there was no standing. Then I cried unto the Lord, "O, Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." When I saw you go up in the pulpit I was enabled to spread my case before the Lord. "Gracious Lord," I said, "Thou art acquainted with all my concerns. Do in Thy mercy speak a word through Thy servant to comfort my heart."

The first words of the chapter read quite broke down my spirit and so melted my heart that I was broken all to pieces. I burst into tears, and the language of my soul was, "Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee." I did not know how to keep silent till you were done. I wanted to be alone, so as to give vent to my feelings. I could hardly walk straight out of the chapel, I had so little bodily strength. In the afternoon I did not feel well, and I was afraid I should not be able to go to chapel, but when the time came I felt better. I earnestly besought the Lord to give me strength of body, so that I could hear the evening's discourse. My mind was so calm, and while you were preaching it was so drawn from all below the skies, and I had such a view of the Lord Jesus Christ as *my* God and Saviour, that I could then take up the language of one of our poets where he says—

"And while our faith enjoys the sight  
We long to leave our clay,  
And wish the fiery chariots, Lord,  
To fetch our souls away."

I felt I could leave all my friends to hear the voice of my Beloved saying, "Come up higher." "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? There is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee." Nothing delights my soul like the Gospel when accompanied with Divine power to my heart. I could often sit and listen to you for another hour, if you had the strength to preach.

Now I have something else to tell you. I went to bed that night as happy in my soul as I could be, but I had not been in bed long before I awoke feeling very ill—such a faintness came over me. I threw off the bedclothes, not knowing where I was, and then came on a violent attack of sickness, which lasted some time. The pain in my body was very great. I got to the window, feeling as faint as could be, threw it open, and sat against it the remainder of the night until six o'clock the next morning. I did not call any one, though I felt so very ill. My mind was very tranquil—not so much as a murmur. All next day I was so ill, and so sore with the pain, that I was unable to leave my bed. I could not take what my friend brought me: I had no appetite to eat or drink. I did not leave L\*\*\* for two or three days after. It was named to Mr. M\*\*\*, who very kindly sent his car to take me home. I was very pleased to accept it. My father is much the same. I had hoped he would have been better. One night he dreamt that the Lord was drawing him through the ceiling, and he began to bless and praise the Lord. But mother woke him out of his sleep, and he wondered what was the matter. He appeared quite himself for a day or two, but it is not lasting. There is no trouble like the mind. I have sometimes wondered if there is anything in us that the Lord is displeased with, that He has permitted such a sore trial to continue so long, and I am sure there is no one upon the earth who would live a more godly life than I desire to live. It does so make my spirits sink that I hardly know how to live under it. Many prayers have we sent up to the Lord for his restoration to health. He was a man of a gracious experience. I remember him telling us of the Power that once fell upon him. He could not reach his hat to go from the chapel, and had to go to bed the rest of the day. But I see I must conclude.

Wishing you much of the anointing,

Yours very sincerely, M.


It must be distinctly understood that the above was sent us in strict confidence, and not for publicity. But we believe the Lord may be pleased to use it for the edification of some of His tried ones, and therefore print it; nor must the writer take it as a breach of privilege. It is wonderful what many of the Lord's children have to pass through, mentally, physically, and circumstantially, and how they prove the all-sufficiency and faithfulness of the Lord in the whole of His dealings. And in every instance in which Christ is glorified in the manifestation of Himself by the Spirit's power in the midst of the trial, all is indeed well. Our dear and afflicted friend has our warmest sympathy and prayers; though she is in spiritual things favoured above many of the Lord's people, and would doubtless be envied by them.—THE EDITOR.

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## A VILLAGE PASTOR OF THREE SCORE AND TEN.

April 12th, 1881.

Dear Sir,—I have enclosed, as usual, the postage stamps for the *Gospel Advocate*. We sincerely hope this will find yourself and Mrs. Baxter in health, both as it respects the soul and the body. I find the full use of natural powers a very great blessing, and especially in age. I am often astonished that my health appears more firm and established than it was at 30. In years that are gone by, that portion of God's most holy Word was often laid on my mind: "Even to old age I am He, and to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made and I will bear." I should not know I was old by feeling. When I was completely cut down by the law I was afraid to ask God to be merciful unto me, lest there should be hypocrisy in it, but I thought I would look once more into my bible to see if there was any hope. Opening it at 118th Psalm, the following portions struck me very forcibly: "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." Twenty-two years passed before I was called to appear in public; when I was requested to read at Flimwell, when Mr. Pert was absent. I did not think of going further than reading. I supplied as reader at Battle and Flimwell, until one morning Mrs. Holt, whose house I used to frequent, said to me, "Give me your sermons, Mr. H—; the people say you do not want them. If you would speak for a quarter of an hour only they would be satisfied. They have nothing to say against the sermons (which were Mr. Philpot's), but they can understand you better." I used to make a few remarks when reading the lessons. I said, "Give you my sermon, Mrs. Holt, that's a likely thing now, is it not?" She said the second time, "Take and give me your sermon"—speaking very abruptly. (Mrs. H. had been a former pupil of mine.) It suited very well, for it so happened that I had two sermons in my pocket, and only one service to take that day. Sometimes I had two. To satisfy her I put one into her hand, and she was very well pleased, and so was I, for if nothing came to my mind I should be at no loss. However, the new birth came to my mind, and I spoke on it. After service I asked the person who hired the room whether I was to do as I did that morning, or whether I should read as before? (He had previously requested me to speak.) He said, "Do as you did this morning."

The Lord has indeed chosen not only the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom of them that love Him,  foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. How wondrous are His judgments, and His ways past finding out: showing Joseph by dreams his future exaltation, and then permitting occurrences to take place which, to all human appearance, would prevent their fulfilment. The Lord, according to promise, gave Abraham a son in his old age, yet demanded him to be sacrificed. But His secret will was different from His revealed will, for it was evidently not the Lord's intention to allow him to be slain. He showed Abraham, by painful experience, what it was to give an Only Son to be sacrificed for the sins of His people; and it proved Abraham's faith to be genuine, an unwrought, powerful, obedient, overcoming principle. Abraham is rightly called the father of the faithful, and a true pattern of them that believe to the saving of the soul. The Lord was graciously pleased to allow Satan to try my faith by bringing the most horrible blasphemies into my mind; but when he came in like a mighty flood, driving everything before him, the "Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him," and set the feet of my faith so firm upon the Rock of Ages that nothing could move them. It was as easy now to believe, as it was difficult before, previous to the trial. I now saw the Scriptures as I never saw them before: a Divine glory seemed to rest on them. All nature appeared different. But forgetting the things that I passed through, I was for converting others. It was only to turn from sin to God; to believe in Christ; what happiness and peace they would have. The Lord says, "When a woman is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she is delivered, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." So is it with every Zionite; they rejoice that the Man Child is born into the world. We unite in christian love and best wishes.

Yours in christian bonds,

C. H.

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## Letters by the Household of Faith.

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LETTER BY RUTH BRYAN.

Bethel Cottage, Feb. 26th, 1857.

"*The judgment is God's.*"—Deut. i, 17.

My dear one,—You say, will I write to you? Ah in very deed, I have abundant cause to write, and speak too, of Him, Who is my Beloved and

my Friend, and "Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." He overcomes me with His love and loveliness, and gives me many days of heaven upon earth, let who will gainsay it. Oh, ever praise the worthy, precious Lamb. Fear I shall write but a jumble. Have so little time now. First, your other dear note was sweet and melting. You seem to have lost the savour, but He changes not. Second, I marvel at what you say of Sabbath, as Lady L—— told me you enjoyed the afternoon so much. I need that word, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils," for I often find things are not repeated just as they were. Third, I am glad you are enabled to leave your bodily ailments with the Lord: that is the way to see wonders. I do not like the pain in your back, neither did Mrs. B——, unless it is the remains of spinal affection; but "He will make it plain." That word about not waiting for His counsel is enough to say, "Wait." Dear friend, I am yours to serve in any way you need, and I can, so let me know how you go on.

How gladly would I have had you share my feast on Sabbath,—dear, holy, happy day! One of the days of the Son of Man, all through. Very memorable. It began with Ruth ii, 14, before going out in the morning. I saw the parched corn to be precious Jesus, parched indeed in the fire of Divine wrath for our sake; and dipping the morsel in the vinegar I saw to be like fellowship with Him in His sufferings. My soul did melt before Him, and I went to the Sanctuary full of His matchless love, but fearing the feast was ended, because I so often do not get so much out when I have had it at home. During prayer at chapel Psalm lxxx. last clause of 1st and the whole of the 2nd verse were powerful in my heart. When the sermon began I got hearing for others, when the Lord said in my heart Psalm xlv. 10, and then my mind was absorbed in Him, Who made me forget all beside, and through the three services I was blessed, which is very unusual; and also at tea, when the minister and his two friends were here, and the secrets of our Beloved were flowing from soul to soul; and again on Monday, when the love of Christ constrained him to come, and we were of one heart, and each brought out the portions wherein we found Him. We had no time to talk about what others thought. How gladly would I have had you and two others sitting down at our banquet. He does live in the blessedness of union and oneness with Jesus. The first time I saw him in the pulpit I was rather naughty in despising his young looks, when these words came: "There is little Benjamin with their ruler." I knew Benjamin is the beloved of the Lord, who dwells in safety by Him, so this was a lift. I heard better in the evening, but did not want to see him here, and wished I could be out when Mr. Newton brought him, and thought if I did see him I could not talk to him, and determined to be very still. But, ~~as usual~~ my plan was all wrong, for to my great wonder and joy I

found him in the very secret of "Christ, all and in all," and he has gone through deeps to get at it. His coming here has been a blessing to my soul. Now you know this is all personal and experimental; as to his being our stated minister, the Lord has "quieted me in Himself" with these portions: "The government shall be upon His shoulder;" and, "But Mary sat still in the house," and "Sit still my daughter." Christ is my House, in which I sit before the Lord and wait His will. From the above I feel that I must leave the public part of the question until the Lord tells me otherwise. I am not even able to ask for any certain man, but I am caused to wrestle for a certain ministry: namely, the glad sound of liberty "by the Trumpet blown over the sacrifice." So if questioned about Mr. W—— coming, I must be silent; but if questioned as to my own hearing I must confess that I have specially had the renewings of the Holy Ghost therein, and have found Him Whom my soul loveth. And in feeling that many will reject it, this verse has been very sweet:

"If on my head, for Thy dear name,  
Shame and reproaches be,  
All hail reproach and welcome shame,  
So may I follow Thee."

My dear friend, my soul is full of the blessing of the Lord. My heavenly Naphtali yields me such royal dainties; and out of this Asher, "His bread is fat indeed." Oh! would that I could pour into many a heart what mine enjoys. A glorious Christ is heaven below, as well as above. You need not fear offence in staying away, I quite understand it; and you can keep all this to yourself, and still say you have not seen me, if it will keep you from perplexity. You need not be bewildered; just hear for your own soul, and leave all the rest; the decision or judgment rests not with you or me, or even those who are wisest, "it is the Lord." "He will work and none shall let it." And in thinking of the various things which are working, these words have been much upon my mind, "To do what Thy hand and Thy counsel before determined to be done;" and I find sweet repose in the storm on the bosom of love. You will always be tossing while you listen to the restless waves of creature opinion and will. You must come to my dear word: "My soul wait thou only upon God."

At the Sacrament the minister prayed that we might each seek the lowest place, and quoted that Jesus said, "I am among you as one that serveth;" and then the Beloved said in my heart, "None of you can have the lowest place, for I have taken it. I was made a curse for you." Oh, did not my soul sink in melting love at His pierced feet.

I have been enjoying Isaiah xxx. 25 and 26. When the towers of self are brought down, and great 'I' slaughtered, what blessedness ensues:

having nothing in self, but possessing all things in Him. Oh, what a kernel do I find Him to be when the Spirit cracks the nut. I must cease. Would I could be a warm coal to your heart—I mean a coal of His love, which hath a most vehement flame. Fare thee well.

In Him our most adorable and loving Lord,  
Your own affectionate

RUTH.

Isaiah xxvi. 31.

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## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

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**FAITH AND ITS EXERCISES.**—You that have faith, or pretend to it, must look for trials. Graces are not crowned till they are exercised; never any yet went to heaven without combats and conflicts. Faith must be tried before it be “found to praise and honour.” It is very notable; that wherever God bestoweth the assurance of His favour, there presently followeth some trial (Heb. x. 32): “After ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” Some are cast upon troubles for religion soon after their first conversion, like these as soon as illuminated. When Christ Himself had received a testimony from heaven, presently Satan tempteth Him. “This is My beloved Son”—and presently he cometh with an “If Thou be the Son of God,” Mat. iii. 17, with Mat. iv. 1, 3. After solemn assurance he would fain make you question your adoption. So see Gen. xxii. 1: “It came to pass that after these things God did tempt Abraham.” What things were those? Solemn intercourse between him and God, and the God of his seed. When the castle is victualled, then look for a siege.—*Manton.*

**JOY IN TRIBULATION.**—In ordinary crosses there are many reasons of laughing and joy; as the fellow-feeling of Christ. If you do not suffer for Christ, Christ suffered in you, and with you. He is afflicted and touched with a sense of your afflictions. It is an error in believers to think that Christ is altogether unconcerned in their sorrows, unless they be endured for His name’s sake, and that the comforts of the gospel are only applicable to martyrdom. Again, another ground of joy in ordinary crosses is, because in them we may have much experience of grace, of the love of God, and our own sincerity and patience; and that is ground of rejoicing, Rom. v. 3. “We glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience.” The rule holdeth good in all kinds of tribulations or sufferings; they occasion sweet discoveries of God, and so are matters of joy. See also 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10: “I glory in infirmities,” and “take pleasure in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” They are happy occasions to discover more of God to us, to give us a greater sense and feeling of the power of grace; and so we may take pleasure in them. Lastly, all evils are alike to faith; and it would as much mis-become a Christian hope to be dejected with losses, as with violence or persecution.—*Manton.*

## ESSAYS ON HART'S HYMNS.—LII.

## HYMN 48.

*"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."*—Matt. xxiv. 35.

ONG the precious names borne by the Friend and Saviour of sinners, those of "Faithful and True" are not the least, Rev. xix. 11. These add the crowning lustre to all the rest. Vain were all the promises had they been uttered by a fickle God. Of the greatest questionable validity would the obedience and atonement of the Lord Jesus be, were they not linked with His intercession above, and were not that intercession based upon His never-failing remembrance of His people.


In order the more forcibly to represent to His exercised and doubting family this grand attribute of immutable faithfulness, the Holy Spirit has placed on record words united to the most striking imagery. Heaven's canopy, bestud with its glittering luminaries, whose constancy has been observed from ages far remote, and earth's lofty pinnacles, whose date no man can tell, are alike and in turn brought before the reader of the inspired volume, to bear testimony to the unchangeability of Him "Who is not a man, that He should lie, or the son of man, that He should repent." Thus when Jacob and Israel, in their diffidence, say, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God," the Lord in prefacing His notice of this dishonouring language, says: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold Who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth," Isaiah xl. 26, 27. The permanency of Heaven with its lights and light-bearers, while Jehovah wills them to remain, and the utter impotency of man to touch or affect them in any way, constitute an argument for His Own supremacy over all creatures, and His ability "to save even to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." For Jesus is the Ruler of the heavens; and "by Him all things consist," Col. i. 17.

And when He deigns to show the glory and enduring nature of His great saving work on behalf of His elect, He equally appeals to what may justly be considered as the most stable of His creative works, and puts the heavens first and the earth afterwards, saying,



"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but My salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished," Isaiah li. 6. In all this majestic Old Testament language, the faith of the humblest believer in Jesus will recognise the same Speaker Who says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." And O what sweetness underlies this truth! He in Whom the heaven-born soul trusts for pardon, peace, and eternal life, is He Who thus pledges Himself to be, in the full manifestation of His gracious power and fulfilment of His promises, "the God of salvation, to Whom belong the issues from death." It is He Who saith to the sin-plagued and law-condemned soul, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." It is He Who whispers to the distressed, disconsolate and forlorn, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

In referring to the earth for contrast to Himself, His words and works, the Lord selects what seems the mightiest monuments of His power. For what the pyramids of Egypt are to man, that are the lofty-crested mountains to God. Nothing can surpass the marvels of the former, as the production of human skill and labour; nothing the latter, as the creative formation of Jehovah. How the former were built may still be largely a matter of speculation; how the latter arose in their grandeur—some attaining a magnitude of seven miles in height—must ever remain a mystery of Omnipotent power. Yet when He would assure His people, "tossed with tempest, and not comforted," of His unalterable concern for them, what saith He? "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee," Is. liv. 10. And when the faith of Zion can affirm, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," she can also add: "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea," Ps. xlv. 1, 2. The Psalmist, also, filled with holy joy and admiration at an imputed righteousness, which is of God through Christ by faith, employs the same sublime speech, and says: "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains"—or, "the mountains of God," Ps. xxxvi. 6. And here again may be recognised the voice of the



Beloved, Who says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

Such language affords fine scope for the pen of a Joseph Hart, and with spiritual approbation we follow him when he writes:

"The moon and stars shall lose their light;  
The sun shall sink in endless night;  
Both heaven and earth shall pass away;  
The works of nature all decay." Ver. 1.

Yet must we not be hyper-critical when dealing with these words, nor draw misconceptions from what Scripture sets forth in a similar way. It is certain that a fiery ordeal of a combined destructive and purifying nature awaits this earth of ours, and that in the vast and at present inconceivable change which this will effect, the visible heavens will also participate. For Peter declares that, "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens *shall pass away* (the very same words that Christ uses) with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." For "the heavens and the earth WHICH ARE NOW, by the same word (that brought the deluge) are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," 2 Peter iii. 7. Whether this universal conflagration will involve the destruction of the vast planetary system; or will be confined to the thorough transformation of all that now is presented to view in the firmament around our earth and in the earth itself, is what none can decide. Nevertheless, there is abounding consolation in the fact that "we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," 2 Pet. iii. 13. That promise was distinctly given by the mouth of Isaiah (chap. lxxv. 17); and yet abides its fulfilment by the faithful Promiser. It is, therefore, a solemn truth,—subject to that proper development of its signification which only the Lord can and will make known, and that by the event itself, that—

"The moon and stars shall lose their light;  
The sun shall sink in endless night."

For to Zion the sacred promise pertains: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory," Isaiah lx. 19.

But while

“ Both heaven and earth shall pass away ;  
The works of nature all decay ;”

there shall no evil happen to those “ who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the Hope set before us” in the Gospel of Christ. Hid in the clift of the Rock, sheltered in the wounds of Jesus, the universal convulsion which shall rend, and fill with everlasting confusion the proudest and stoutest hearts among the ungodly, shall find all believers unappalled. The day of judgment and of burning wrath shall fully endorse the words :

“ But they that in the Lord confide,  
And shelter in His wounded side,  
Shall see the danger overpast,  
Stand every storm, and live at last.” Ver. 2.

Are there many of the Lord’s redeemed and called, but doubting and fearing ones, who can realise this?—Were Christ at this moment to appear “ in the glory of His Father, and all the holy angels with Him,” “ in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,” that, in that very instant, all their legal chains would fall off, their fears be chased away for ever, and their enraptured souls exclaim, “ Lo, this is our God : we have waited for Him, and He will save us : this is the Lord ; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation,” Isaiah xxv. 9. The thought may appear incredible ; but it is none the less absolute truth. And how do we know this ? Because it is declared that, “ when He shall appear we—*i.e.*, all the members of His body—shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is,” 1 John iii. 2. And if a sight of Him by faith brings the imprisoned soul out of its bondage and distress, how much more shall the full display of the Beloved leave no more room for the questioning of His love and mercy ; but “ make perfect” our love, “ that we may have boldness in the day of judgment” (chap. iv. 17). It must be so : for all who are His shall be made *like Him* : and what then could they fear ? Hence they who by the teachings of the blessed Spirit have been led under the sense of sin and guilt to the smitten Rock, to embrace it for the want of a shelter, shall, in their transformation to the Saviour’s image, regard with complacency the terrors of the Lord ;

“ Shall see the danger overpast,  
Stand every storm, and live at last.”

For Christ has promised this; and we are assured that He will "come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10. And this could never be, if to His Own day were other than "the marriage of the Lamb," and were His bride not "ready" for it. But the antitypical Esther shall be found on the auspicious occasion thoroughly purified; namely: with "oil of myrrh"—the Spirit's unctuous application of the blood of the atonement; and with "sweet odours"—the graces of the Holy Sanctifier, Esther ii. 12. And thus "arrayed also in fine linen, clean and white,—the righteousness of saints," shall the bride stand before her King and Husband: and then shall be "heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready," Rev. xix. 6, 7. And you, doubting child of God, whose hope of mercy rests alone in the precious blood and imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus, shall share in the joy of that day; for the Lord hath declared it; and

"What Christ has said must be fulfilled;  
On this firm rock believers build:  
His word shall stand, His truth prevail,  
And not one jot or tittle fail." Ver. 3.

It is not material to the beauty or consolation in this verse; but it has often been with us a matter of question, as to how the second line of this verse should read—whether in the *indicative* or *imperative mood*. Does Mr. Hart mean it as an assertion, that "on this firm Rock" all believers *do* build; or is it an exhortation for believers *to* build on this firm Rock of the truth of Christ's testimony that,

"His word shall stand, His truth prevail,  
And not one jot or tittle fail."

We cannot decide this; nor do we think any can. Either way it is orthodoxal. Either way it proclaims Christ to be the only Rock—the Rock of Ages. In the Saviour's words to Simon: "Thou art Peter, and on this Rock will I build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18, we perceive the testimony Peter had delivered to the Godhead of Christ compared to a Rock; or, rather, that Divinity itself, to which the

testimony was borne, is called a Rock. And thus the eternal faithfulness of Christ, which is engaged to fulfil every word He has spoken, is designated a "firm rock" by our beloved poet. And on this all who have the faith of God's elect *do* build their hope of final salvation: for were it possible that either the merits or the mercy of the Lord Jesus should undergo a change, then must every believer be resting on the quicksand of uncertainty. But

"His word *shall* stand, His truth prevail,  
And not one jot or tittle fail."

And what is His word? In substance it is thus defined by Mr. Hart:

"His word is *this*, poor sinners, hear;  
'Believe on Me, and banish fear;  
Cease from your own works, bad or good,  
And wash your garments in My blood.'" Ver. 4.

This is the very essence of the Lord Christ's teaching, as our Prophet, by His Spirit in the gospel. He first makes the sinner "poor," 1 Sam. ii. 7. He then imparts a willingness to "hear" the truth. Job xxxvi. 10. He then in His Own sovereign time and way speaks home to the heart of the weary and heavy-laden soul. Psalm lxxxv. 8. His words bring faith into the trembling heart. Dan. x. 18, 19. He banishes its fears by the assurance of His mercy. Psalm xxxiv. 4. He instructs it to cease from *self*—that is, "from its own works, bad or good," 2 Timothy i. 9. And leads it to the Fountain opened in His side for sin and uncleanness. There the soul is purified from its felt corruption and delivered from its feared evils. Then the garments of the conversation are washed, like those of the leper after he had been sprinkled with the ashes of the burnt heifer. And, let all preachers and hearers mark this! However plausibly statements may be made, and arguments adduced to lead to any other method; and however impediments may be placed in the way of a Christ-needing soul, the sure unerring record of Divine counsel and instruction from the lips of Him, Who has redeemed His chosen to God by His blood, is summed up in this:

"Cease from your own works, bad or good,  
And wash your garments in My blood."

This is the teaching the Spirit ratifies by His Christ-glorifying work. This is the preaching He inspires in all His sent heralds. The disease and corruption of human nature must indeed be felt in

order to an appreciation of this cleansing. But anything that beclouds His blood's efficacy, and the welcome given by the Saviour to all who need it, is not of the Spirit of Christ, but may be traced to the leaven of a legal spirit, and the insidious suggestions of the prince of darkness: for only by the blood of the covenant are prisoners sent forth from the prison and sanctified in hope of eternal life.

THE EDITOR.

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FOR THE YEAR 1882.

"We are journeying," &c. Num. x. 29.

On our upward journey tending ;  
Looking for the life to come ;  
To the heavenly Canaan wending,  
Oft we inly sigh for home.

Soon life's turmoil will be over ;  
Soon, and every storm will cease ;  
Soon with Thee, Celestial Lover,  
Thine shall "enter into peace."

By Thy Holy Spirit's drawing ;  
By His unction in Thy Word ;  
By His sweet internal calling,  
May we press to Christ the Lord.

Sale m, Tunbridge Wells.

For the "hope laid up in Heaven,"  
Through each sorrow may we press ;  
Through six troubles and through seven,  
Bring us safely to Thy rest !

Oh preserve, uphold, and keep us  
Through each tribulation great ;  
Never, never, never leave us  
Till we share in "Glory's weight."

Faithful is Thy Word unbroken.  
Work submission to Thy will ;  
All Thou hast to Zion spoken  
Thou most surely wilt fulfil.


T. EDWARDS.

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LIFE AND PEACE.

Mid Lavant, Feb. 3rd, 1854.

My dear friend and brother in the Lord,—

AY *grace* and *peace* be multiplied to you. I would not use these words merely as a form of salutation, but my heart's desire for you is that you may enjoy the very substance of them. My dear Lord has, in His mercy and goodness, let me enjoy this evening something of the blessedness of that peace "which passeth all understanding," while I have been shown in a measure what I owe to His grace. I often think it is but little we can know while dwelling in these poor tabernacles, compared with what we shall know hereafter; but many times when the blessed Spirit has come and shown me something of what I am, and of what Jesus is to me, I have been well nigh overwhelmed with a sight of His grace. I am almost inclined to think that Jesus can hardly be so precious to you as He is to me; but we will not *fall out* on that point. "Unto you that believe He is precious:" and I know He is your treasure and your rich portion, as He is mine—and we, and all His dear people, shall have the blessedness of growing

in grace, and of increasing in the knowledge and love of Him for ever and ever.

Your letter this morning was very acceptable to me. I love to hear His people say, as you did, "I must and will praise Him." It is a grief that we cannot praise Him more than we do. But, my dear friend, I am often brought, to fall at His dear feet, telling Him He knows all, and entreating Him to get glory to Himself in me and by me, and in which way it seemeth best to Him. And then, in His goodness, He shows me He is glorified in the salvation of such a poor, lost, wretched sinner as I am, or should have been, had not a way been contrived by which I could be saved with an everlasting salvation: and my dear Jesus comes and says, "I am *the way*." O I shall be one of the brightest jewels in His crown,—if the most undeserving shine brightest to the praise of the glory of His grace. How shall I tell you what Jesus is to me? I know you cannot tell me, or anyone else, one thousandth part of what He is to you. May the blessed Spirit—the glorifier of Jesus—reveal more and more of Him to your soul and to mine.

I should like to have (and I think I have) boundless desires of knowing what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of His love. Our desires and expectations may be boundless, when we think that we are dealt with according to the merits of the Son, and the love of the Father. In His great mercy He does sometimes let me, for a time, lose sight of self and see none but Jesus: and then it is as easy, as it is delightful, to bless and praise His dear name: and I begin to wonder how I, and the rest of His people, can think of doing anything else at any time. But, by and bye this dear Sun of Righteousness withdraws, and then what gloom and dulness comes on, even though He may not have given permission to the enemy to come and harass and stir up all the wretched, God-dishonouring feelings that are in our hearts. All day yesterday I was dull and shut up, and could not rejoice in any of the blessings which I knew belonged to me. But, my dear friend, I hope I am learning to love *all* the Lord's dealings with me. I should like cheerfully to set to work and learn His lessons, be they never so hard. Well, we shall learn all He designs to teach us; for the blessed Spirit will "guide us into all truth"—and no other Teacher will do for us. I find all I have ever learnt or seen, except what the blessed Spirit has taught and shown, is altogether unprofitable. But when He comes and tells us why we were led in that rough path, and why this dark and trying dispensation was appointed for us, all to prepare the way for making Jesus precious to us, how love and praise spring up in our souls. I can, and do, cry out, "Dear Lord, never let me fret and murmur at any of Thy leadings. Do enable me to yield myself wholly up to Thee—come light or

darkness, joy or trouble; let me have no choice." And then all is sweet peace, till the Lord again sees good to let me feel what it is to have a wretched will of my own, desiring something or other that He sees good to withhold, even while I know it is in love He crosses me.

I find all His lessons come to one point—they bring me to know that "without Him I can do nothing." I do hope, and believe I feel, more and more of this every day. I want to feel it still more; for it is blessed living, when we are compelled to be calling on Him all the day long. I hope I may soon know so much of my own weakness, as not to dare to take my eyes off Jesus, and to be ceaselessly crying, "Hold Thou me up. Dear Lord, don't let me look on the right hand, or the left; but keep me looking unto Thee." O the blessing when He enables us to take all our cares, and burdens, and hard cases, and fears and troubles to Him! What a friend, and councillor, and tender-loving Father I have found Him! no words can ever tell. I have heard many of the Lord's dear people speak of the *first* manifestation of Jesus to their souls as being the most blissful; but He has revealed Himself to me more gradually than He does to some, and every time He breaks in upon me, I think He is more precious than He was the last time I saw Him. Sure I am, that every time He comes I wish to fall lower in shame and confusion of face, when I think how I *can* sin against such love. None but the Lord knows what blessed times He has favoured me with; and oftentimes He brings back the remembrance of some of them, but all that is in His own hands. I cannot recall His sweet words which He has spoken just in a fit season. And I do bless Him that I cannot; for if I could I should not be dependent on Him, and I want to lean on Him for all, more and more.

If His people did but know what He is about to do when He begins to strip and empty them, how readily would they cry out, "Take all, dearest Lord, to make more room for Thyself." They would not, as I have done (though I fain would believe He will keep me from doing it again), try to hold fast the very things which draw the heart from Jesus. I have parted with nothing, till He has made me willing in the day of His power; but I am a living witness that He takes away nothing, but to give what is infinitely preferable.

Now, my dear brother, I am afraid I may have wearied you; for I have not written as I should like to have done. I wanted to bless and praise our dear Lord in every line I wrote. Do, if He enables you, as soon as you have read this scrawl, entreat of Him to bless me with a thankful, loving heart, and to enable me, and you too, to live more on Him. A few days ago He gave me such a view of



the boundless riches that are treasured up for *us* in Christ, as I cannot now recall, and I saw that the only way we had of honoring Him, was by receiving out of that fulness and rejoicing in it. May a great abundance of "love, joy and peace" spring up continually in your soul. The blessed Spirit *dwells in us*, and should we not look for the fruits?

Whenever you will write to me. I shall be pleased to hear from you. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another," &c.; and we may speak on paper. I do entreat the Lord to keep you living very near Himself, that you may be continually drawing fresh supplies of living waters to refresh your own soul, as well as those to whom you preach. But that living water is within you, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. I am enough in my right mind this evening to be certain that *all* that comes us is, and ever will be, *just* right. Our dark and light days, and mournings and rejoicings, and all our feelings, are known and ordered by Him. Who so loved us as to give Himself for us. If I have written too much you must tell me, and I will try and make my next letters shorter, though I feel much inclined to make this longer. Yours, my dear friend, in the bonds of the everlasting gospel.

MARY GREENWOOD.

*Communicated by M. Welland.*

### THE CLAIMED JEWELS.

*"And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."—Malachi iii. 17.*

**B**EFORE taking a running glance at the former part of this chapter, I would just give the motive, or reason, for writing upon this portion of the word of God. The September and two following months of the "Gospel Advocate" of the year 1880 contain my remarks upon Deut. xxxii. and the latter part of the 10th verse, "He led him about," &c. There is this expression in it, *Free-will-mongers*. I was told of this being hard upon my fellow believers, which I certainly did not intend to be, as I did not feel a bitter spirit at the time, and I think the spirit of it all through would not at all lead any one to assert this, if fairly treated: as it was rather comforting, as far as lawfully allowed by the word of God, that is, to all quickened by the Spirit of God into whose hands it may come. And feeling a desire to vindicate the truths of God, although in a humble way, through being constained, or feeling some zeal to do so, I herewith venture to say a word or two, as I may have to refer to a remark or so made to me by the same person, bearing upon the truths of the everlasting gospel. I make no further apology.

But, in coming to the subject, we find in the 1st ver. of this iii. of **Malachi** the Lord Himself, speaking through His prophet, says, "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me : and the Lord Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant Whom ye delight in : behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." I would wish to know how much of man's free will is to be found in the whole verse. We have those two beautiful words, which they are found to be, when spoken by God the Spirit, 'will' and 'shall.' I WILL do it—not, if they will accept of Me, or My salvation : as I think we shall be able to prove salvation to be entirely of God *to whom* He will, *when* and *how*, before we conclude this subject. Although John the Baptist is here referred to, we find a greater than he spoken of, even the Messenger of the covenant, Whom the people of God delight in. Not the messenger of the old covenant, but of the one more glorious, even the new (Jeremiah xxxi. 31). He did come suddenly, when perhaps the least expected ; and He will doubtless come in the same way when He comes to take His saints all home to glory. And as if that were not sufficient the Lord again says, "Behold, He shall come." Is there no anticipation of that time—no looking forward to it—by those who long to see Him as He is ? Then, in the 2nd verse we have a solemn question put, "But who may abide the day of His coming ?" Who could but for His coming as the Redeemer of His chosen people ? In every other sense He will be as a consuming fire. He will then try the works of men, whether they be good or bad ; that is, manifestly : "And who shall stand when He appeareth ? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's sope." They alone shall stand for whom He came upon earth. A searching question, enough to make the living examine themselves, and see whether they be in the faith or not : as they alone will stand His all-seeing eye. "And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver : and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." He is spoken of as sitting ; not in a hurry, but waiting until the furnace has accomplished the purpose for which He intended it. It is said that the refiner watches the metal until he sees his own face reflected in it. Is it not so with a precious Christ ? Does not the furnace in the end bring about the reflection of Him in the object of the furnace-work ? Has it not a tendency to give such souls a holy boldness in the things of God ; to take away some of the dross, and give a zeal for the honour and glory of a Triune Jehovah : as also to wean such from flesh and sense ; to make them champions for truth, and burn much of their wood, hay and stubble—however much the process may appear contrary to these effects *during the process* ? When the work is done by the furnace He then makes

quick work of it, and brings them out, but not before then. The purging doubtless has reference to their works and dross ; purifying cleanses them from such things just spoken of, that they may serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Heb. xii. 28). When brought into that state, we read of such an offering being acceptable ; and find a full proof of it in the Psalms (li. 17) : "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Subsequently we read of God coming to judgment for such needy people, and as a swift witness against their enemies, &c. ; against those who oppress the hireling in his wages !

Just in passing let me ask how many, in this our day, would be exempt, who employ hands, and who wring and squeeze the last drop of exertion, as it were, out of them for gain, and especially out of His people ? How many keep up large establishments, whose conduct would not bear investigating. But mark, they will not escape His all scrutinising eye, though He may seem to be blind to such conduct now in their cases, yet how often do we find such carried away in a moment ! What will their ill-gotten gains do for them then, but condemn all such as oppress the widow and fatherless and that turn aside the stranger from his right and fear not Me, saith the Lord ? Thank God, that though these oppressions have an effect here, yet finally they shall do no harm : for we read of "all things working together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose." Rom. viii. 28. Looking at the 6th verse how we find it mangled, on the right hand and on the left, by free-will making God as changeable as the wind. "For I am the Lord, I change not ; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." They make God to love a person one day, and hate him another ; but how does such a belief agree with Job xxiii. 13 : "But He is in one mind, and who can turn Him ? and what His soul desireth even that He doeth,"—even in spite of everything. Several scriptures might be quoted in proof, if they were needed.

"The whole host of Satan, together combin'd,  
Can't alter His purpose, nor yet change His mind,  
Who, who, then can turn Him from His wise decree ?  
From love everlasting, so rich and so free ?  
'Ere the earth had a form, or Adam a place,  
Salvation was plann'd for a remnant of grace :  
He never will leave them—they never can fall,  
No sheep will be absent, when Jesus doth call !

Although the Lord speaks of Israel's returning to Him and His then returning unto them, we must ever bear in mind the characters spoken to by Him : His chosen people, as a nation—not the Egyptians. And again, "Where the word of a king is there is power."

Ecclesiastes viii. 2. But more, it has reference to the worship of Israel nationally, or literally; and that is just how He deals with nations. If they nationally acknowledge Him, He smiles upon them; if they reject Him, He frowns. Depend upon it, there is great reason to fear it is our case now. There appears every evidence of our yet having to endure more of His frowns, if He prevent not, if He stir not His people up to jealousy for His honour. There is much need of humiliation, for us to be humbled and bow down before Him. In the next verse He asks, "Will a man rob God?" And then tells them they had done it. Have not we as a nation robbed Him (especially men in high positions, denying His existence, and trying to prove the Bible to be false). There is much of that spirit existing in all classes of society. Infidelity is fast gaining ground, even in the *so-called* ministers of Christ. May He still have mercy upon us, and forgive our iniquities and sins! Then in ver. 9 He tells them (Israel after the flesh) they "are cursed with a curse;" that the whole nation have robbed Him. And are "*we* better than *they*?" "No, in no wise." (Rom. iii. 9.) Yet the Lord tells them what to do, and prove Him if He would not bless them, &c. Has He not done it with England? Where has there been such a favoured place upon earth as our land? Are we to have *Ichabod* written throughout the length and breadth thereof? Were it not for the sake of the salt it contains—though they be everywhere spoken against, and treated as the offscouring of all things, we should have no hope. O may He, for their sakes, still have an eye of pity upon us, and spare us! May He give us hearts to acknowledge Him in all our ways, though He first chasten us! Should He spare, yet I feel certain He will first chasten. Then, further on, the Lord declares He will rebuke the devourer for their sakes (Israel). It is said, He begins first at His own house; and depend upon it, it is only too true. But is it not better to be dealt with by Him than by either the world or the devil? or even to be left to one's self, so that He will have mercy upon us? And the same verse implies that the enemy shall only go *so far*; then the Lord will stop his career of destruction to His chosen people. "And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of hosts." As a proof of the fulfilment of this verse turn to Psalm cxlvii. 20: "He hath not dealt so with any nation." Did not all those nations, who saw His wondrous works with Israel, acknowledge the Israelites being a blessed people one time or another? Was not their fear upon those nations? But more, will not all the nations see the blessedness of the people of God, when they see their glory and honour? When the sea shall give up its dead, &c.; when all created men and women will be raised to receive their reward, they will be seen as blessed then, if not before.

Now comes a grave reproof for those whose bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost: "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, what have we spoken so much against Thee?" Who that has experienced anything of a deep furnace work can say, they are free from this charge? *Can any?* Has there been no rebellion, no hard thoughts; and more, no hard words against the best Friend they have ever had? Such sayings, of which the remembrance sometimes brings tears in their eyes, feeling their ingratitude—and more, their devilishness; that they should ever dare to say such fearful and such awful things against Him, Who could crush them in a moment: and would, were He like man, as changeable as the wind! But in this same chapter and 6th verse He gives the reason of His not doing it; yet is it not a matter of solemn awe—and sometimes a little gratitude in reference to His long suffering? at least, it is so in my case, and has brought tears in my eyes more than once, and has been the means of humbling me in His sight! Some years back, when passing through a fiery furnace, I had such awful rebellion, which used to make me tremble. And once, before I knew the contents of this chapter, I had used much such expressions as we find in the 14th and 15th verses to a friend, who, the next time seeing me, told me he had found almost word for word what I had said in the Bible. He warned me more than once I should have to shed tears for such things. I did not then believe it; but have had to experience it many times since then, although I have had to feel myself to be the most unthankful and hard-hearted being created. No one need crave to experience the contents of these verses. If they do, and God allows them to go through them, they will find it an awful state to be in, to their cost, although it may be profitable in the end, and may redound to His honour and glory; yet, depend upon it, the devil is not idle in such things. He paints God as black, or blacker than himself: but we know he was a liar from the beginning. Although these stout words have been spoken, how we excuse ourselves, and try to free ourselves from blame, until He condescends to give a look, as He did to Peter. Then we are, *and then only*, brought to weep at our base ingratitude! I have not a word to say against the charge made in the 14th and 15th verses, as I have spoken the words with emphasis: and felt them to be true, and more, have felt God to be hard-hearted, as if He delighted in cruelty, and perhaps have said as much here and there as any one against Him, but all to my shame when in my right mind.

(To be continued.)

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## "CHRIST THE LORD."

Luke ii. 11, 12.

Could we approach Jehovah as He dwells,  
Hid in incomprehensibles;  
Veiling His presence in a light  
For seraph's eye too pure and bright,  
And building His eternal throne  
High over all dominion :

The blaze would blind, confound, consume  
us all.

But oh ! poor vessels, broken in the fall,  
With what sweet awe, and trembling joy  
we see

Our Maker in our likeness made,  
Our Sovereign in a manger laid,  
The Filial Glory swathed in our humility.

Submission, truth, and majesty divine

In His fair visage shine ;  
And every loving look, and smile convey  
The sweetness of that bosom where He  
lay—

That bosom where He ever lies. Jn. i. 18  
He from His ivory palaces—

A Priest for ever as a King of kings—  
Myrrh, frankincense, and cassia with Him  
brings

To perfume His one offering on the tree.

A Rose that breathes the Father's grace  
is He !

Unfading, but unfolding beauties ever,  
So full of blessing, and with Mercy's savour  
So laden, that His garment's hem  
Shall drop a healing balm on them  
Who do but touch it with the hand of faith.  
The Sun of love to sow 'mid nature's death  
The light of life, and raise immortal bloom !  
The Dayspring of a glory yet to come !

An ensign bright  
On Zion's shining height,  
To nation's wandering in the dark unfurled !

A Messenger from God to His lost world !  
Whose words like heaven-reflecting streams  
shall flow,

Singing glad tidings through these vales of  
woe ;

Swelling their fruitful flood. and quick-  
ening voice,

Until the deserts blossom and rejoice ;  
On their bright bosoms bearing joys  
supernal—

Joys, like their Source, unbounded and  
eternal.

Redhill.

C. H. M.

## THE NATIVITY AND THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

**H**HE advent of the Lord Jesus Christ must ever be a matter of the deepest interest to all believers. That He Who is "the mighty God," should be "manifested in the flesh" of true humanity is "the mystery of Godliness," but such as must be enquired into by all "the godly in Christ Jesus." Had He not been born, He could not have died ; and had He not died, there could have been no sacrifice for sin, no hope of everlasting life. Precious indeed is the declaration of everlasting love : "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same ; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15.

But while we are able to fix with tolerable certainty upon the day of the crucifixion, the day of the Redeemer's birth is not left on record. And Rome, ever busy with her superstitious appointments and dogmatic decrees, has fixed it on the 25th of December. Not till about 400 years after the incarnation of the Saviour was this

period decided upon; and then it was in the face of strong Scripture evidence to the contrary; which they would do well to weigh, who, after the Galatian method, are given to "observe days, and months, and times, and years." Gal. iv. 10.

There were "shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night," Luke ii. 8, when "the Desire of all nations" at length arrived, and in infantile form "was found in fashion as a man." Now, it is admitted that there is not the slightest warrant for supposing that in the month of December shepherds and their flocks would remain in the open air during the night, October, or the beginning of November, being the latest period in which this was done; it often ending with September. Sensible of this Gresswell, followed by Mimpriss (in the *Gospel Treasury*) have laboured to establish April the 5th or 6th, the time of the passover, and four years before the date called Anno Domini, as the veritable period of the Saviour's birth.

But another witness has appeared on the scene. One of the most remarkable works of the present day, entitled *The Chain of Ages*. and written by a clergyman in the Establishment\* and which ought to be in the hands of all who, like the Bereans, take pleasure in searching the Scriptures to see whether things that are affirmed really are so. The author, a truly learned and scientific man, is one of the few who labour to uphold in its integrity the Word of God against the abounding cavils of infidelity, which arrays "the oppositions of Science (falsely so called)" in antagonism to what the Scriptures testify. In pursuing his investigations, Mr. Galloway, among the vast number of topics which he discusses, refers to the time of the Nativity, and the appearance of the star which guided the Magi, or "wise men," to Bethlehem.

Like most others, perhaps, we had always regarded that "Star" as something miraculous, or a flaming meteor flashing through the heavens. The thought had never impressed us that, if this were so, the effect of its appearance and course would doubtless have affected others besides "the wise men." But the fact of Herod's sending for them, and "enquiring diligently what time the star appeared" (Matt. ii. 7), and that, not until they had formally announced the seeing of it (ver. 2), proves it to have been one of those heavenly luminaries which, by the eyes of the multitude in general, is only looked upon in the same way as the many others which equally adorn the firmament and excite no curiosity.

Without entering into the astronomical details and calculations placed before us in his great work, Mr. Galloway, to our mind, very conclusively proves that the star was none other than that called *Spica*, in the constellation *Virgo*, and which, after having

\* Rev. W. Galloway, M.A., and published by Sampson, Low, & Co. : price 16s.

been seen at its rising by the Magi in their own country some months before, would be found by them stationed over Bethlehem about September 29th, B.C. 1, (not B.C. 4, as usually stated) and thus "probably three months before its close." Mr. Galloway, who is a sturdy opponent of Popery, points out the beauty of this phenomenon in the following passage (and it should be noted that he says he has submitted his reckonings to some of the ablest men in the country, including, we understand, the Astronomers Royal of England and Scotland, without being confuted).

"Certain devout members of the Ancient Eastern College of the Magi, over which the prophet Daniel in his time was President (Daniel ii. 48; iv. 9; v. 11) faithful to the observation of the tokens which Daniel had left to that scientific body, are enabled to determine by the heliacal rising of a certain star at a set season, the exact lapse of the measured time predicted for the birth of the promised Messiah. Accordingly, having made arrangements for their long journey, they proceed after the winter to Jerusalem, preparatory to the next Passover, and there make the inquiry, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews, for we have seen His star in the rising (*Greek*), and are come to worship Him." Herod, to whose ears it comes, is troubled, and all Jerusalem with him, at the startling inquiry. The Scribes are consulted as to where the Messiah should be born, and reply, "In Bethlehem of Judea," according to the prediction of Micah (Matt. ii. 1-6). In these inquiries, and in the solemn consultation of the Scribes, in which Herod himself took part, it is not too much to allow that a few weeks passed; while the paschal solemnities were celebrating, and the Feast of Weeks, or of First Fruits, was drawing near. It is probable that these devout men from the East, who undoubtedly held the faith of the Jews, religiously joined in the observance of these festivals. But, Herod, having sent for them, and diligently inquired what time the star appeared, directed them, according to the answer of the Scribes, to Bethlehem, and desired them, when they had found the young child, to bring him word again, that he also might go and worship him, or pay him homage. The star had, up to this time, afforded them no guidance beyond the date of the Nativity of the Messiah. The time of its observed heliacal rising was probably at the Feast of Tabernacles. But when at Pentecost, just after the celebration of that festal day, they turned their faces southward, to proceed from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, the same star which in the East they had seen in its rising just before the sun, but which, in the portion of the sun's annual course that had elapsed, had now come into the evening, was beheld by them in the sky just before them southward, and reached its stationary height in the heavens as they arrived at Bethlehem; on beholding which they rejoiced with great joy. It was not the star, but the directions given by the Scribes and by Herod, which took them to Bethlehem. But they could not but be struck with the circumstance of the same star, which had furnished the mark of the fulfilment of the time, thus appearing before them in the sky upon that very journey. The interval of time would accord with its having passed into the early hours of the evening, if they arrived at Bethlehem on the evening of the Feast of Pentecost, or First Fruits, when they presented to the Lord that offering of their First Fruits, "gold and frankincense and myrrh," together with the offering of their own homage as the First Fruits of the Gentiles; and if the star which marked the time when "the Word made flesh"—literally, "*pitched His tabernacle among us*" (John i. 14),—was observed in its rising on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and was, as seems most probable, the resplendent star, "The Ear of Wheat" in the hand of "The Virgin,"—the star "*Spica*" in the Zodiacal Constellation "*Virgo*." We have already remarked on the



correspondence of names, in this case, to "the *Seed* of the Woman,"—the offspring of "*the Virgin*," the "Corn of Wheat" which should fall into the ground,"—how singular it is in its appropriateness, and that it may not be accidental but pre-ordained in the mysterious providence of God, in anticipation of the appointed time when the Word was made flesh, and "pitched His tabernacle" among us at that feast, on the day which is kept [in the Established Church] as a memorial of St. MICHAEL, the Prince of the Israel of God. I have adduced sufficient evidence upon this subject to justify me in inviting the exact calculations of astronomers."

We would simply add to the above that the astronomical sign of the Virgin with and Ear of Corn did not originate with Rome, but, as Admiral Smythe states, was so represented "among the Orientals."\* Therefore there is nothing Popish in this remarkable incident. But the object we have in view in bringing this matter before our readers is to cast some illustrative rays on another obscure portion of God's word, and to expose the fallacy of regarding Christmas as the time of the Nativity. We may at that season, without offence, avail ourselves, as believers, of the general holiday to assemble in the Lord's name and speak and hear of the wonders of incarnate love, but let us ever be guided by the star of God's unerring word. Of all lamps to the feet and lights to the path there is none like that of Heaven. Its resplendent luminaries have long been the guide of the earthly traveller and sea-faring man; without the aid of which they would in numerous instances have perished—without which voyaging to any great extent would have been an impossibility. So in our spiritual course, when neither sun nor stars for many days appear and no small tempest lies upon us, we know how hope of being saved is taken away. Acts xxvii. 20.

But when the Star of Bethlehem arises and sheds its sacred rays; when the Incarnate Word shows Himself by His Spirit through the written word, how soon changed is despair or despondency to abounding hope, and the feelings of death and darkness to life and light! Yes: "He hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. i. 10. And His LIFE is not more potent and indestructible than His LIGHT is infallible in its instructive guidance. It leads out of the shadow of death, and brings from bondage into the glorious liberty of the gospel. And the scriptures are the great means by which the Spirit of Christ (Who was in the prophets, evangelists and apostles) works. Therefore to these it becomes us to take special heed, and the more so that error extensively abounds, and the deceit of our hearts and the devices of Satan are so great. Led by the Spirit, through the Star of the Written Word, to Christ the Incarnate Word, we shall find the Pearl of great price, and willingly bow before Him, rendering the homage of our hearts; while all we have as "gold, frankincense, or myrrh," will

\* The Midnight Sky, p. 137.

be laid at His dear feet, He being realised as an antidote for all our ills and ailments, and as the everlasting portion of our souls.

THE EDITOR.

It may not be amiss to append to this article Kirke White's famous hymn on the same subject. Most may know it, but some may not,

When marshalled on the nightly plain,  
The glittering host bestud the sky,  
One star alone, of all the train,  
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.

Hark ! hark ! to God the chorus breaks  
From every host, from every gem ;  
But one alone the Saviour speaks—  
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode.  
The storm was loud, the night was  
dark ;  
The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed  
The wind that tossed my foundering  
bark.

Deep horrors then my vitals froze ;  
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to  
stem.

When suddenly a Star arose—  
It was the Star of Bethlehem.

It was my guide, my light, my all ;  
It bade my dark forebodings cease ;  
And through the storm and danger's  
thrall

It led me to the port of peace.

Now safely moored, my perils o'er,  
I'll sing *first* in night's diadem—  
For ever, and for evermore,  
The Star ! the Star of Bethlehem !

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### "NO CONDEMNATION."

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London, July, 1881.

My dear Friend,—



AM truly sorry to hear of your increased sufferings and affliction, and pray that the Lord may grant you enduring grace, and strength equal to the day of trial. His gracious presence being with you, although you do not always sensibly enjoy it, proves that the sting of death is removed, that there is "no condemnation." "Christ being made a curse," has taken away all condemnation from His people, and makes even death their gain.

"A little while," and He that shall come will come. And then, farewell pain, and all the evils and afflictions of this life, and welcome Christ, and everlasting bliss.

How painful the way has been to you. How dark, at times, and past your understanding ; but how many times has He drawn near in the midst of pain and suffering, and spoken His word with such blessed power to your heart that you have rejoiced in tribulation, and have longed to depart to be with Him.

He is the faithful God. Our times are in His hand, and He will not make the burden heavier than the strength He gives to bear. May you be enabled to trust Him entirely ; to be resigned to His will, to do as seemeth Him good.

What a mercy to be taught to know the Lord. To see that crucified One pierced for you, and your sins put away for ever by

His one offering. That precious blood of the atoning sacrifice is the covering, and by it the Father declares: "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins." And then to know that you are washed and purified, and stand complete before God as a member of the mystical body of Christ, and that soon you will realize in its fulness what now you have the earnest of. Again, all the promises are "Yea and Amen in Him," and He is faithful to His word. He will not forsake the works of His hands; and He hath said, "I will never leave thee;" and, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." He will be with His people to the end, to bear them up, and bring them through; and nothing shall fail of all that He hath spoken.

Those who reach the haven of eternal rest have more or less while here a path of trial and sore temptation. David said, "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee." And the Lord sent from above, took him, and drew him out of the many waters. Jeremiah cried out of the low dungeon, and the Lord delivered him; and Jonah cried out of the belly of hell, and proved that "salvation is of the Lord." None ever cried unto Him in vain, or waited upon Him and were ashamed. His gracious word is, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

It may please the Lord to grant you much light and peace the remainder of the journey, or He may permit the adversary greatly to try you. Remember all His dealings are in love; and no temptation, or trial, can alter His eternal purpose. His covenant is everlasting, and Christ hath obtained eternal redemption for us, and ever lives to make intercession.

Darkness may intervene, and "weeping may endure for a night," but the morning will surely come—the Sun of Righteousness will again shine, and the joy of the Lord will be your strength.

Now as Christ has removed all condemnation from His people, there can be no separation from His love. What a sweet thought! "One with Jesus." Sorrows will cease, afflictions have an end, temptations endure only for a time; but the love of Christ is everlasting; there is no change in Him. And then, to be "for ever with the Lord." May He comfort your heart; be to you a very present help in every time of need, and keep you in perfect peace.

So prays, yours sincerely,

London.

F. P.


Unbelief may perhaps tear the copies of the covenant which Christ has given you; but He still keeps the original in heaven with Himself. Your doubts and fears are no part of the covenant; neither can they change Christ.—*Rutherford*.

“A GOD OF KNOWLEDGE.”

“*But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets.*”

Daniel ii. 28.

Dear Sir,—

 have thought much lately of the backwardness of many of the Lord's people in regarding His special interpositions for them in His providence, thereby withholding the glory due unto Him, and also what might be a means of encouragement to His tried children.

Under these considerations I send the following for insertion in the *Advocate* if you approve. All those concerned in the circumstances have long lain in the silent grave.

A minister, who had preached some few years in London and other places, went with his wife and family to reside in a country village, where he was settled over a small congregation. For many years, being a family man, the tradesmen willingly supplied him with goods, and he, not having much of this world, was glad to be accommodated with quarterly accounts: it being usual to settle them after the quarterly collections, he having no fixed salary. His principal creditor was a thriving tradesman, who regularly attended his ministry, he was grocer, draper, &c. ; and as there was not the competition in trade then as there is now, he was able to command prices for his goods which many thought exorbitant. His shop was often filled with customers all the day, and he was considered one of the most prosperous men in the village. I do not know that he made any profession of religion beyond his regular attendance on the ministry.

On one particular Sunday the minister (a most quiet and inoffensive man) was led to speak in a very solemn and searching manner of the end of all things, and the vanity of riches. A person who was present noticed the countenance of the before-mentioned tradesman to undergo some remarkable changes during the sermon, and quite believed the Word had taken an unusual effect of some kind. On the following day he sent a note to the minister, requesting the settlement of his account, saying that life was uncertain and he wished the matter settled. This unexpected demand threw the poor minister and his godly wife into great perplexity, being quite unable to meet the demand, and having no rich friends to apply to for the loan of it, or any expectation from any quarter before the usual collections; in short, they had but one refuge to fly to. Six days of painful anxiety passed without the least light in the dark cloud which hung over them. On the following Sunday the minister preached as usual, the tradesman filling his usual seat. A gentleman from a distance had come into

the village the day before to spend a few days with a brother who was living there, and attended the chapel on that Sunday. After the services of the day this gentleman had a strong impression on his mind that the minister was under some particular trial. This impression had such an effect upon him that he had scarcely any sleep. After a sleepless night he arose early and walked the garden until breakfast time, resolving to visit the minister as soon as he could, which he accordingly did. After some conversation he told the minister of his exercise of mind the previous night, and wished to know if he was under any particular trial, and whether it was of a pecuniary nature. He was informed of the circumstances. The cash required was immediately presented, and received with much gratitude. The account was soon settled, and the glory given to God. The tradesman continued his attendance at the chapel while he remained in the village; but having realised a fortune he retired to a handsome residence some miles distant. Soon after he was afflicted with deep depression, so that he could not take the least pleasure in anything. This increased upon him so much that he was taken to an asylum, where, after some months of deep mental anguish, he ended his days. The minister lived a few years longer in the path of tribulation, then ended his days in peace, leaving many witnesses that his labour had not been in vain in the Lord.

Alas! how few comparatively, even of the Lord's people, consider themselves to be but *stewards*. Many look upon what the Lord has given them as *their own*; but He says, "The silver and the gold *are Mine*." The cherished idol may be allowed to stand untouched; but oh, how soon the Lord may send bodily or mental affliction, so that all may be marred. The Word of God says, "Honour the Lord with thy substance;" also, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Good John Bunyan says in his riddle,

"There was a man though some did count him mad,  
The more he gave away, the more he had.  
He that bestows his goods upon the poor,  
Shall have as much again,  
And ten times more.

2 Corinthians ix. 6.

OBSERVER.

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There are those who deem it a cruel thing to preach the doctrine of the grace of God. I know of nothing that can give hope to the poor sinner, but this truth, that the grace of God is free and sovereign. *Krause.*

Christ often heareth when He doth not answer. His *not answering is an answer*, and says,—Pray on, go on, cry on; for the Lord holdeth His door fast bolted, not to keep you out, but that you may knock, and it shall be opened.—*Rutherford.*

## AN INCIDENT IN EARLY LIFE.

**W**HEN I was a boy I was on my way, early one Sunday morning, to feed some fowls and rabbits which were kept in my father's timber yard, when, as I passed the door of a public house, a tall man, a soldier, the son of Colonel White, who lived in the neighbourhood of St. Ives (my native place), accosted me and asked, "Do you know who I am?" I replied, "Yes; your name is Robert White." "Well," he said, "You go to the workhouse and tell Drage, the porter, a gentleman wants to see him at the Cow and Hare, and I will give you a penny. If he says, 'Who is it?' you say, 'I don't know.'" As I had not been used to go on such errands I suppose I hesitated, when he said to the landlady, "O he is afraid I shall not pay him; here is your penny." I ran to the workhouse, when the master himself opened the door. I delivered my message, when he said "Who is it? Is it Robert White." I replied as I had been instructed, "I don't know."

No sooner had the words escaped my lips than I had a terrible conviction of having committed two sins. One *lying*, the other *sabbath breaking*. Having been brought up to attend Church and to live a strictly moral life, I was overwhelmed with terror at the thought of what I had done, and immediately ran home. I did not, I believe, make any confession of this until some years after, when I joined a church, and then I begged of them not to think that I considered this as a spiritual conviction; but that it had left such an impression on my mind that I could not forbear relating it, as the first instance when personal and actual sin was heavily charged on my conscience.

I fear that there are many of our young friends, simple and guileless in spirit, who have been thus basely tempted by wicked men to their own sorrow. May they, like myself, have deep and lasting spiritual convictions that may drive them to the cross of Christ for shelter, and to the footstool of mercy for forgiveness.

But if these base ensnarers of our youth should die in their callous state, they shall assuredly experience the awful sentence passed on "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Watford, Jan., 1881.

E. SKEELES.


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Go where you will, your soul will find no rest but in Christ's bosom. Inquire for Him, come to Him, and rest you on Christ the Son of God. I sought Him; and I found in Him all I can wish or want.

Lose not sight of Christ in this cloudy and dark day; learn not from the world to serve Christ, but ask Himself the way: the world is a false copy, and a deceitful guide to follow.—*Rutherford*.

## PROTESTANT STATISTICS.

Dear Editor,

 I HAVE been interested in reading your article on "Protestantism and Popery;" but could not help coming to the conclusion that this is a matter in which no reliance can be placed on statistics. For instance, out of the 405 millions governed by Protestants, how many are now under the rule of a popish *Viceroy*?

Whilst Continental Nations are endeavouring to disengage themselves of the most dangerous elements of Popery, what is the case with ourselves? Is not Popery in its double stream of Romanism and Ritualism making enormous advances in this nation? And is not our Government actually now seeking to carry out the abomination of our sending an ambassador to the court of the *Man of Sin*? Also, as in all Roman Catholic countries, Infidelity abounds, so here in proportion to the advance of Popery, so is the spread of infidelity; although these two monsters are sometimes permitted to destroy each other, yet they invariably unite at all other times against the people of God, and the word of God!

Again, if we go a little farther in the dissection of Protestantism, how large a proportion is infected with that which has been well called the spawn of Popery,—even Arminianism also with Rationalism, &c.!

Therefore there seems to me to be abundant cause for humiliation in the present state of our country, and—if it might please Jehovah to inspire it—for crying mightily unto Him for the removal of these evils, and for withholding (if it might be His will) the judgments that must follow.

Yours faithfully,  
J. F. C.

Dec. 12th, 1881.

[Our correspondent is perfectly correct, so far as the cause for humiliation before God is concerned, at the still wide-spread and spreading influence of Popery in so-called Protestant nations, specially including our own. But it is in the contrast—notwithstanding this prevalence of Antichrist—between what *was* and what *is* the domineering and oppressive power of Rome that, all true believers in the ultimate victory of Christ over it have occasion to "thank God and take courage." We do not desire to over-rate the strength of Protestantism or to under-rate that of the Papacy. *Nationally*, both in the church and in the state, there is a powerful alliance with "the Man of Sin." But as we are ever prone in the midst of a trial to overlook or minimise our abounding mercies, while we magnify the former, so is it with many in relation to Rome's doings. They

either are not well-read in historical facts, or they forget them. The Papacy, ever since its rise, has been a restless, struggling power; and will be until its destruction. It always has aimed to govern by means of the rulers of nations, and ever will. But while we deplore the tendencies and acts of certain of our own and foreign legislators—and (to the amazement of many) especially of Prince Bismarck, let us not forget the time *was* when Rome *commanded* the sword of every potentate, whilst now not one can be found to draw it for her. And while Arminianism is correctly styled “the spawn of Popery,” and it has often been said that all Arminians would join with it did opportunity offer, the recent address and threatening protest from the great Wesleyan Conference against any attempt on the part of the Government to enter into political alliance with the Vatican disproves the latter assertion. Neither is it correct to say that Infidelity and Popery “invariably *unite*” against the people of God; though they are equally hostile to their faith. It is Zion’s mercy that they usually are at bitter variance. As we have already said, let every effort be made to counteract the policy and doings of Rome, but let us be calm, and not unduly alarmed, nor forgetful of what Protestantism as a power has, by the grace of God, already attained to.—THE EDITOR.]


### PERSONAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Although none of the following letters were sent for the press, we think they possess sufficient interest to constitute a justification of their publication. Many others similar in spirit have we received, for which we also cordially thank our correspondents for their expressed christian love and good wishes, having been unable to personally answer them.

#### AN ENCOURAGING WORD FROM NEW ZEALAND.

Wellington, October 1, 1881.

Dear Sir,—

 have sent you a money order for one pound for the same purpose as I have done before, the balance I leave in your hands to use as you please. Dear Sir, I desire to tell you something in as few words as I can. I am truly thankful to the Lord, through you, His dear servant, for those four articles on The Eternal Covenant of Grace, because it was a singular incident to me. Just at the time they came out, I heard a sermon from a minister of Jesus—our Lord and Saviour, God—on the Psalms (l. 5), but he could not open it clearly, in a gospel sense, to persons of the children of God, and I was much perplexed about it. I read your four articles and re-read them with much soul profit. I saw to be “joined to the Lord is one spirit”—and who can separate? I also saw that the Lord Jesus Christ is the living covenant of grace: and I believe if the



children of God would read those four articles, in the spirit of the word, they would be more confirmed in the person of Jesus Christ, as the living covenant of grace, instead of resting so much on the doctrine of the covenant of grace; for the doctrine itself will do no good without the person of the Son of God: for He was the eternal Son of God, therefore, He must be the living covenant of grace. These truths have been very precious to my soul, after I was so perplexed by that sermon that I heard. I think it would be far better for the servants of the Lord not to speak on such texts as Psalm l. 5, except they could open them in a gospel sense, as the children of God could understand them.

O how my soul has been blessed in a word coming from my dear native country. I have been in New Zealand more than 40 years. We have between fifty and sixty children, grand children, and great grand children, all well at present. Sir, you may think what deep waters I have waded through, and the Lord is as precious to me now as He was the first moment I saw His lovely face in the spirit of His word. And I am truly thankful that He was so kind as to tell us beforehand that we should have to pass through tribulation. Although the dear Lord gave us a good starting point, yet when the sun went down it was dark—because the sun never shines at night. But the Sun of righteousness always rises in the morning and gladdens our hearts. Dear Sir, may the blessed bond of the covenant bind us more together in one—even in Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless your work of faith and labour of love, and all the children of God with you. I know you will bear with my poor writing.

Yours truly, but unworthily,  
JOHN KILMISTER.

We can assure our personally unknown, but spiritual recognised and esteemed correspondent, that his letter is very cheering to us, and he must not think it a liberty that we have taken in publishing it. The dear Redeemer, the work of the blessed Spirit, and the discriminating truths of God, are the same in New Zealand as in England. And the union one feels in the Lord with all His dear people, as we come to know them, be they scattered where they may, is an evidence that there is but *one* family, "in heaven and earth," named of the Father in our precious Jesus. May our humble efforts continue to be blessed to our aged brother, and many more, not only in New Zealand, but, if the Lord will, in numerous other places of the British dominions. We sometimes anticipate with sacred joy the final gathering together in the home above of all the now separated vessels of mercy, and the everlasting rehearsal of Jehovah's praises for wonders wrought in salvation, grace, and providence.

THE EDITOR

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## WAITING AND WATCHING.

January, 1882.

My dear Friend,—

It has been my intention for some time past to send you a line, then I thought I would wait till such a time, but most of all the daily cares, anxieties, and perplexities of the way have intervened. On Christmas-day morning these words came with sweetness, and rested upon my spirit: "Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us." I had a sweet meditation upon our glorious Surety as the dayspring in the sinner's heart.

While reading your New Year's address I could but notice the similarity in your desires and mine of late. Sometimes I have been led to beg submission to the will of God, and in my poor petitions to Him how often do the words you quote of dear Hart's form a part:

" May we all our wills resign,  
Quite absorbed and lost in thine;  
Make us walk by thy right rules;  
Lord, direct us—we are fools."

I have had many trying things to encounter since I last wrote to you. Unlooked-for troubles have come. When I say unlooked-for, I mean from quite an unexpected quarter, for I have often been expecting troubles of different sorts.

I told you the Lord had prospered my way in providence. True, so He had; and I believe it was to enable me to meet the emergency that would arise. When I went to London I ascertained that where I thought I should certainly have £12 to take, it turned out in the end I did not take a penny. I had promised faithfully to pay a lawyer in E\*\*\*\* £15, as an instalment to pay off a loan obtained to erect my machinery when at C\*\*\*\*\*, and with this £12 I thought I could easily do it. But it came to this, all the money I had earned, which I had hoped to have got a little start with, had to go to meet this money. This, with other exercises, has at times weighed much upon my spirit. These trials drive me to the Fountain Head, and oh, what pleadings with Him to be kept from rebellion.

" Dark are His ways of providence,  
But fixed is His decree;  
My reason's blind and weak my sense—  
Then, Lord, remember me."

I should not have told you so much of this had I not informed you before of the Lord's gracious dealings with me in a providential manner.

This morning I had a little lift again; for, when sitting down to breakfast, I opened a letter from a friend and inside was a card,

with the words, "Behold thy servants are ready to do whatever my Lord the king shall appoint." It came from that friend who, as I have informed you before, had it laid upon her mind that the Lord intended me for the work of the ministry, when she knew nothing at all of my exercises thereon. She told me when I went last March, that she did not believe the Lord's full time was come to send me forth, though her heart went out to the Lord all the way on her journey to chapel for the Lord to be with me that day. When I saw her some time afterwards she quoted what I have mentioned above. A few weeks back I was often calling in question everything, and felt it could not have been approved of by the Lord; but one morning, while on my knees before Him at family prayer, when quoting the words of Jesus: "Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,"—they entered into my very soul, and oh, what a laying of myself at His dear feet I then felt, to be anything or nothing that He might be glorified. This morning, after receiving the card, and entreating of the Lord to lead me, the words of the poet broke my heart:

"Depend on Him, thou can'st not fall;  
Make all thy wants and wishes known;  
Fear not, His merits must prevail—  
Ask what thou wilt, it shall be done."

O how I did beg of Him to enable me to ask for blessings He designed to give, that I might not go contrary to His sovereign will; and afterwards how sweetly these words dropped into my soul, "Behold, O God, our shield; and look upon the face of thine Anointed." Here I saw a precious Jesus as my Daysman Mediator. What a shield! One able to resist all the fiery darts of the devil, when they come in like a flood upon the soul. Is not this a token for good? Why,

"Here's our point of rest—  
Though hard the battle seem—  
Our Captain stood the fiery test,  
And we shall stand through Him."

Now I feel I must just tell you how much I have at times enjoyed reading the *Gospel Advocate* this year. When I have felt the sweetness of it on my spirit I have thought, I will tell Mr. Baxter about it when I write; then the thought has come, he will think otherwise of me than he ought to think, so through this I have been deterred from so doing. Once I well remember breaking out, and saying: "Bless him, Lord; bless him; bless him." I have much enjoyed at times your Essays on Hart's Hymns: and it is my sincere desire and prayer that He will spare you long to His church and people here below, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer; and that it may indeed be, as you quote, Psalm xc. 16-17.

I must now close. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest upon you and yours. So prays,

Yours affectionately

For the truth's sake,

A WAITER AND WATCHER.

GRACE OMNIPOTENT.

Birmingham, December 30th, 1881.

My dear Friend,—

Enclosed is Post Order for 2s. 6d., in payment for one copy of *Gospel Advocate* for the ensuing year, wishing you all needful grace and strength for you in your arduous work, and the Lord's blessing resting upon the same. I cannot refrain from telling you of the Lord's goodness in closing this eventful year, in having called to a knowledge of Jesus, as his only hope of salvation, *my brother* in the far-off land of Australia, without any outward means, but by the inward teaching of the Holy Ghost; giving him a sight of his real lostsinful state, and leading him to Jesus for mercy and salvation. And at His feet he has found mercy and pardon, filled with praise and thanksgiving, enjoying that peace which passeth all understanding. He was, to use his own words, "an unbeliever of unbelievers." A child of many prayers, and in his early days heard the truth preached; but to my joy, and his eternal gain, the Lord has preserved him in all his wanderings, and in these last days brought him as "another sheep" into the fold of Jesus. He is now more than sixty years of age. May we not say, "What hath God wrought?" To Him be the praise. May the Lord "increase our faith," and help us to hold on in faith and prayer to the end for ourselves, those near by the ties of nature and friendship, and the church at large.

My kind christian regards to yourself and family, and all friends at Eastbourne,

Yours sincerely,

O. E. S.

THE CHANGING AND UNCHANGEABLE.

Leicester, December 31st, 1881.

My dear Friend,—

Herewith I send you a few more scraps from the pen of dear Ruth. How time passes away. Another year gone, and oh, what mercies have we seen during its course. And what a vast volume of *loving* kindness and *tender* mercy has been the dealings of our God, both in His holy providence and the aboundings of His invincible grace with us, the most unworthy of all His children, up to the present moment, all through our eventful pilgrimage, these sixty-seven years, in the wilderness. And now we are spared to erect

another Ebenezer. "*God hath helped us hitherto.*" Surely we can say, as Moses said of Israel of old, "*He led him about and instructed him* ; He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle *stirreth* up her nest, fluttereth over her young, and spreadeth abroad her wings, *taketh* them, *beareth* them on her wings : so the Lord alone did *lead* him, and there was no strange God with him." O what a mercy to be *drawn* by the Father's loving kindnesses to Christ ; *led* by God Himself all the way, and kept *leaning* upon Him, *feelingly dependent* upon Him for everything. "*Kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed.*" Well, dear brother, it cannot be long at the longest before we shall hear Him say, "*Come up higher.*" What a mercy, then, to be found in Him.

"The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you : the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you, and give you peace." Prays yours sincerely in Him,

R. A. B.

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## Letters by the Household of Faith.

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LETTER BY THORPE SMITH.

8, Nichols Street, Humberstone Road,  
Leicester, Feb. 4th, 1873.

My dear Cousin,—This morning's post brought me your letter and the card. On visiting Buckminster, the first Sunday in January, I received intelligence of the death of your beloved husband, and of the two Gibsons, Edward Harvey, of Lonthorpe, and W. Dickenson, of Lathy Lodge ; all whom I well knew, and all younger than I am. And so I go about saying, with dear Lyte,

"Change and decay in all around I see,  
O Thou, Who changest not, abide with me."

The omission of myself don't think anything about. When I visited you in October, 1871, I was fully satisfied about your dear partner's religion. I had known him from his youth, and admired his sobriety and consistent conduct ; but I never was fully satisfied about his religion until the visit I allude to, for I had not had much opportunity of testing him before, although I had a favourable opinion of him from all I did see of him. I wish I could say the same of your brothers. I feel for your very trying situation, and know by experience what it is to lose so wise a counsellor and such an affectionate companion and steadfast friend, having done so in

the death of my last beloved wife. I have not, nor can I forget the sweetness which dropped into my bereaved heart on reading, in a kind letter I received from the late Mr. Abrahams, the following words, viz.: "The Lord, my brother, has taken away the desire of thine eyes, but not the desire of thine heart, for that is Jesus!" Those words were like "apples of gold, in pictures of silver" to me, for I could appeal to God, that He knew this was true; and, as my dearest partner said on her death bed, "Thou hast been an idol, my dear!" but added, "Jesus first, and thee next." "Ah," I replied, "that is it; that is as it should be." I doubt not you will feel your loss more and more, as you are led to remember first one and then another of the sweet seasons you have enjoyed together; but, as you justly observe, there are many sweet promises in the word made to the widow and the fatherless. I trust you will be guided by the Holy Spirit in all that concerns yourself and family, who are uncertain comforts, but certain cares. I am in my 70th year, and have reason to bless God for all His mercies, both in providence and grace, goodness and mercy having followed me all my days. On looking back for 50 years since I knew His name, I am covered with shame and confusion on reflecting upon what little honour I have brought to His name and cause. How oft I was ensnared by my light and foolish spirit; how oft did I drink into the beggarly spirit of the world with which I was called to mix; and what fresh guilt did I oft contract by not coming sufficiently out from the world and all its vanities. I cannot draw the slightest comfort from a well-spent life; for on a review of my whole profession, I hate it: I wish it could be blotted out from under the face of the heavens. I oft cry out,

"Had I not Thy blood to plead,  
The sight would sink me to despair."

And some little comfort I find by them, and other such expressions of good men. As again, that dear man of God, Mr. Hart, says,

"While thus I make my pensive moan,  
Upwards I cast my eyes and see,  
Though I have nothing of my own (but sin').  
My treasure is immense in Thee."

As Adam the first made shipwreck of everything, man is no longer trusted with a stock of inherent grace, as some dream and talk of; but all fulness is now treasured up in the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. I have been out this last month to several counties, and though often sorely cast down and discouraged on account of the way, I am forced to believe (from the testimonies of those who, I am persuaded, truly know the Lord) that His word from my mouth does not return void. I have spoken in nearly sixty different places since the Lord opened my mouth—sixteen years ago on the 25th of

January last. I survey His dealings with astonishment, and cry out, "What hath God wrought!"

My children are all well, I hope; being scattered abroad: one in Australia, two in America, two in Bedfordshire, one in Hertfordshire, one in Cheshire, and one three-and-half miles from me here. The Lord has showed me hard things, and made me drink the wine of astonishment. His way to me has often been in the sea, His path in deep waters, and His footsteps unknown; yet I am constrained to say, "He hath done all things well." May He bless, guide, teach, and keep you and yours in all your ways, and lead you into all essential truth, is the prayer of

Yours, most affectionately,

THORPE SMITH.

P.S.—Give my love to your dear children all, and to all relations and friends. Adieu. God bless you.

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## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

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**SWEET THOUGHTS.**—I heartily desire that ye would mind your country, and consider to what direction your soul setteth its face; for all come not home at night who suppose they have set their face heavenward.

If ye never had a sick night and a pained soul for sin, ye have not yet lighted on Christ.

Oh, what folly to sit down and weep upon a decree of God! for who can come behind our Lord to alter what He hath decreed?

Let Jesus Christ make a bridge or stepping-stone of me, provided that His high and holy name is glorified in me.


Be not ashamed because of your guiltiness. Necessity should not blush to beg. You are in the utmost need of Christ; therefore knock and cry.—*Rutherford.*

**THE PROFIT OF AFFLICTIONS.**—It was Tertullian's error to say that, afflictions were to be sought and desired. The creature never knoweth when it is well. Sometimes we question God's love because we have no afflictions, and anon, because we have nothing but afflictions. In all these things we must refer ourselves to God's pleasure; not desire troubles, but bear them when He layeth them on us. Christ hath taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." It is but a fond presumption to cast ourselves upon it. Philastrius speaketh of some that would compel men to kill them out of an affectation of martyrdom; and so doth Theoderet. This was a mad ambition, not a true zeal. And no less fond are they that seek out crosses and troubles in the world, rather than wait for them, or by their own violence and miscarriages draw just hatred upon themselves. Peter's rule is: "Let none of you suffer as an evil-doer," 1 Peter iv. 15. We lose the comfort of our sufferings when there is guilt in them.—*Manton.*

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## ESSAYS ON HART'S HYMNS—LIII.

THE RAINBOW.—Isaiah liv. 9.

“HE hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them,” Pro. xx. 12. How deaf and blind spiritually is man, until grace in its omnipotence is exerted. Wisdom may cry, and understanding put forth her voice. The appeal may be made at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors, but all the while it is only *outward* it will be disregarded. It is the *inward* voice of power that alone commands and inspires obedience—“the obedience of faith.” Neither the threatenings of the law, nor the declarations of the gospel will arrest sinners in their course, though “destruction and misery are in all their ways,” unless the Spirit’s quickening operations attend them. This truth, notwithstanding its solemnity, is full of encouragement for those whose ears are opened to Divine discipline, and who have obeyed the inward admonition to “return from iniquity” (Job xxxvi. 10), and who yet often fear that no really saving change has been wrought upon them. Let them, with all they have to deject them, compare their own *willingness*, and occasional *anxiety*, to hear the Lord’s voice as “the God of salvation,” with the indifference, enmity, and stolid deafness of such as are still held fast by “the power of darkness.” Surely in the latter is fulfilled the word: “They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which *will not* hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely,” Psalm lviii. 4, 5. The thunders of Sinai awe not the unregenerate; the melody of Zion allures them not. “They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course,” Psalm lxxxii. 5. And so it has ever been: for it was

“When, *deaf* to every warning given,  
 Man braved the patient power of Heaven,  
 Great in His anger God arose,  
 Deluged the world, and drowned His foes.” Ver. 1.

If the infinite nature of the merits of Christ, in which the elect have so rich and abundant an interest, be duly considered, together with the everlasting nature of the love of God towards them in Christ Jesus, the long-suffering of Jehovah (though it is ever a matter of amazement and adoration to themselves), can hardly be deemed so wonderful in its exercise towards *them*, as it is in His



enduring, with "the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Not for their own sakes, does the Lord's "patient power," as Hart so expressively terms it, refrain so long from cutting them off. But there are so many connecting links in the chain of providence between the lives of the ungodly and the natural existence of the Lord's own children, as their posterity, that like as unrighteous Ahaz was spared that Hezekiah might spring from him, so it is in innumerable other instances, extending, at times, through several generations of the wicked before the vessel of mercy is born. All we can say of this, is expressed in the language of the apostle: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

But surely in the case of the wicked "there is an end" to the Lord's forbearance. For 120 years, while the ark was preparing, Jehovah tolerated the licentious scoffers of Noah's day. But the flood came at last. "The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man," Gen. vi. 3: and so He still affirms with respect to the day of fire yet in store. The Spirit of Christ in Noah, who was one of the Lord's ancient prophets (1 Pet. i. 10, 11), strove with the antediluvians; that is, He contended by His testimony in the preaching of the patriarch against their wickedness, and threatened them with Divine judgments. But they "resisted the Holy Ghost," in the same manner as did they whom Stephen so long after addressed (Acts vii. 51); that is, they opposed with blaspheming ridicule and scorn His solemn warnings by Noah, and turned a deaf ear to His reproof.

And these scoffers are "the spirits" which are now "in prison," to whom Christ by His Spirit in Noah "went and preached" in the days of their disobedience, when once the long-suffering of God waited. Waited!—and how long? Till the ark was ready for its fore-ordained inmates. Even as now "the Lord is longsuffering," as Peter says, "to usward"—that is, toward the entire elect church among Gentiles as well as the Jews—"not willing that any (of the members of that church) should perish, but that all"—during the course of time—"should come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9. This could never be, unless the Lord's longsuffering allowed the world to continue. And that this is what Peter means, is confirmed by the language of Paul, who, after referring to the electing and predestinating love

and grace of the Father's purpose, says, "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." Eph. i. 9, 10. And then will the end come; and awful will be the position of the mockers and scoffers; yea, of all out of Christ.

And how sweet, believer, to be able to say, 'FOR ME this long-suffering tarried!' FOR MY SAKE were the words left on record: "And therefore will the Lord wait (even until my Surety came in the flesh), that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted (in the work of Jesus), that He may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him." Isaiah xxx. 18. Surely He Who has waited and still waits so long for His people, may now well claim to be waited for by them. O for more of "the patience of hope!" the calm staying of the mind upon His immoveable faithfulness, that we may be fully assured in all our exercises that we shall not wait in vain.

The flood did its work, and that effectually. Let men with the oppositions of science (falsely so-called) admit or deny the universality of the deluge, it was certainly universal enough to accomplish the entire destruction of the human species—Noah and his family excepted—and also of every living substance, which was upon the face of the ground, including, "cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowls of heaven"—save those which were with Noah in the ark. Gen. vii. 21-23. It must have been so; for there is no life, no security out of Christ, the true Ark.

Justice had drawn its sword; judgment had been duly executed on those "sons of God"—or "sons of the mighty," as it may be rendered. These had "taken," with the violence of lust and rapine (as the word "take" in scripture often denotes), the "fair" "daughters of men"—namely, those in an inferior and subjective state, and who were therefore powerless, if inclined, to resist. And it is said in respect of their profligacy, "they took them wives of all which they chose." Gen. vi. 2. The feudal state of the middle ages may afford some parallel to this abounding iniquity on the part of those in authority, as the barons often dealt with the wives and daughters of their vassals as their own property. This is, we

believe, the meaning of the earth being "corrupt, and filled with violence:" and it provoked the wrath of a just and holy God to their eternal ruin.\* But

"Vengeance, that called for this just doom,  
Retired to make sweet mercy room ;  
God, of His wrath repenting, swore,  
A flood should drown the earth no more." Ver. 2.

Mr. Hart, it will be perceived, but follows the scripture narrative in the use of the word, "repenting." He, like that scripture, implies no more than Jehovah's *change of conduct*; i.e., from destroying to preserving. And though many have been the *local* inundations, and many the lives thereby sacrificed, no universal sweeping away of men by a flood, notwithstanding all their unimproved condition and conduct, has transpired during the ages that have intervened to this day, nor will there ever again.

"That future ages this might know,  
He placed 'n heaven His radiant bow ;  
The sign, till time itself shall fail,  
That waters shall no more prevail." Ver. 3.

Much controversy has, we think needlessly, originated over the *first* appearance of the "radiant bow." This at least we know, the Lord never works a miracle, or deviates from the usual course of the great laws by which He rules the universe, without a direct necessity. Usually His very miracles are rather a display of *extra power*, in accordance with those laws (as at the Red Sea), than a subversion of them. Well-known as the *cause* of the rainbow now is, it would indeed have been a surprising phenomenon had the sun's rays never before this period so acted upon the drops of rain as to produce it. But if it had been beheld a thousand times before, this much is sufficient for us, it had never, until the day when Noah came out of the ark and offered his sacrifices, been revealed as an emblem of Jehovah's covenant. Like that eternal covenant of grace, of which it was the emblem, its existence may long before have been a reality, but it needed the Lord's manifestation to make it glorious in His people's eyes. Well does Hart proceed :

"The beauties of this bow but shine  
To vulgar eyes as something fine ;

\* We are fully aware that this interpretation is very different from that which is widely accepted ; but it is that which commends itself to our judgment as the most Scriptural.

Others investigate their cause  
By mediums drawn from Nature's laws.

"But what great ends can men pursue  
From schemes like these, suppose them true?  
Describe the form; the cause define:  
The rainbow still remains a sign." Vers. 4 and 5.

And this "sign" constitutes the shell and empty form in which all graceless intellectual men discover nothing beyond its own beauty. And when in dull indifference the Lord's own people gaze upon it, there is no more soul-inspiring consolation drawn from its appearance than from any other exhibition of nature's beauties and wonders. But how different when the eyes are touched with the holy eye-salve; when the blessed Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to the soul! Let it be pressed down under the weight of its own vileness; let a dread of the holiness of God be upon the spirit; let the heart be full of fears, and the tempter suggesting that God's mercy is clean gone for ever, and that His promise fails for evermore. And then let the rainbow after the thunderstorm be seen spanning the heavens with its exquisite arch; let the heart be moved by the Holy Comforter's remembrance of the Lord's pledge of sovereign, unmerited mercy in connection therewith, and all apathy will be put to flight, the soul will melt under a sense of the sparing mercy and goodness of God, and magnify His name that "all His promises are yea and amen in Christ," unto His glory by us. Then it perceives the truth that, the heavenly bow with its resplendent hues is

"A sign, in which by faith we read  
The covenant God with Noah made;  
A noble end, and truly great!  
But something greater lies there yet.

"This bow, that beams with vivid light,  
Presents a sign to Christian sight,  
That God has sworn (who dares condemn?)  
He will no more be wrath with them." Vers. 6 and 7.

That "these are the true sayings of God," witness what He declares by His servant Isaiah: "For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee,

neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Chapter liv. 9, 10.

The covenant of grace is, then, that which is set forth by "the bow in the cloud in the day of rain;" and the three special views of it by holy men of God, as recorded in the Word, may not be without significance as to the relation of the holy and glorious Trinity to it. First we have the Lord's giving it as a token to Noah, Gen. ix. 13-16. Then there is Ezekiel's vision of it in connection with "the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone;" of which he further says, "And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." Chap. i. 26-28. Lastly we have John's testimony as to what he saw of it in the closing days of the inspired record: "Behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." Rev. iv. 2, 3. Thus in the patriarchal, the prophetic, and the apostolic times the rainbow appears, as the testimony of "a faithful and unchanging God" to the verity of His promises and the certainty of their performances: while the rich expository language of Isaiah, which we have quoted above, amply demonstrates that the sacred and everlasting covenant is what it represents. That Divine compact between the Triune Jehovah, Father, Word and Holy Spirit, in which mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. In which the seven-fold attributes and perfections of the eternal God blend, like the various colours in the arched bow; and blend, for the salvation of His people. And in that blending is also exquisitely set forth how that God is "just, and yet the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The eternal plan was drawn and every provision made in this covenant by the Father's love; the Son by His work; accomplished all which that plan devised all that was needful to meet the great ends of law and justice; and the Holy Spirit watches over the working out of all its details of experimental grace and providence in and upon the souls of the chosen ones.

It is a beautiful thought, as expressed by Mr. Brown in his *Hidden Mystery*\* (page 79): "The three primary colours into which a ray of light is divisible are *red*, *yellow* and *blue*, which together form a ray of pure *white* light. I take them to illustrate

[\*Nisbet and Co.]

and exemplify the infinite *justice*, the unfathomable *love*, and the boundless *mercy* of our God—attributes of the Godhead which are all communicable, and which God communicates by His revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ to His people—all harmonizing likewise with His infinite *Holiness*, itself a communicable attribute. And as these *three* rays together form but *one* pure beam of *white* light, so do they serve all the more powerfully to illustrate the glorious character of the Godhead, which is *Trinity in Unity*, and *Unity in Trinity*."

But while there are only *three* primary colours in a ray of solar light, these, as they are separated form seven rays—and only seven, the emblem of perfection. These are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet; all of which appear in the rainbow, portraying the perfections of Jehovah's glory in the purpose and promises of the Father's love; the atonement, obedience and gracefulness of Christ; and the beneficent operations of the eternal Spirit.

"Thus the believer, when he views  
The rainbow in its various hues,  
May say, 'Those lively colours shine  
To show that heaven is surely mine.

"See in yon cloud what tinctures glow,  
And gild the smiling vales below!  
So smiles my cheerful soul to see

My God is reconciled to me.'" Vers. 7 and 8.

"Happy is the people that is in such a case! yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." Were each child of God, as a believer in Jesus, enabled to attain to this blessed point, to be always mindful of Jehovah's covenant, how would it lighten his load, and smooth his pathway. But only the Holy Comforter can enable him to do this. Yet as "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant," what an encouragement is this for all who do "fear the Lord, and think upon His name," to "give diligence to make *their* calling and election sure." The bow succeeds the storm; and appears in the cloud. So the *storm*, in which law, Satan, conscience and world are busy and threaten to overwhelm the soul, and the *cloud*, behind which the Lord veils His shining face, His mercy and His kindness, are to be succeeded by the rainbow's rich display. It is *afterwards*, in the *end* of the Lord's doings, there is the experience of His covenant faithfulness, and the proof that He is "very pitiful;" nay more,

that "He rests in His love, rejoices over His people with joy," and that "He will ever be mindful of His covenant," and of "the word which He commanded to a thousand generations." Thus the believer in every appearance of the bow in the day of rain may truly say,

"Those lively colours shine  
To show that heaven is surely mine."

And when the Spirit refreshes his soul with a token for good, he may add with reference to those "lively colours!"

"So smiles my cheerful soul to see,  
My God is reconciled to me."

The Lord grant this as the rich portion of all His doubting ones.

THE EDITOR.

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### ALWAYS TRIUMPHING IN CHRIST.

West Meon, Petersfield, Hants.

Jan. 18th, 1855.

My dear Brother in the Lord,—



SINCE I received your last welcome letter (for which many thanks), I have several times felt a great desire to write and tell you of some of our dear Lord's kind and gracious dealings with me. Numbers of things I wished to tell you have come to my mind, but hitherto at times when I had not the opportunity of writing. I know you like the old theme, which is ever new, even Jesus: and O what a blessing that we should so know Him as to find it our chief delight to be thinking, and speaking, and writing of Him. The last time I addressed you I was full of "joy in the Lord." After I had posted my letter, it came to my mind that I had forgotten to sign my name, as well as having forgotten your post town; however I find the letters reached you in due time. After I had written I felt still more joy springing up from the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and when I was retiring to rest at night I wondered whether Paul's "third heaven" could be anything more blessed than what I then enjoyed. I felt surely I have three heavens in one, while thus enjoying the love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then I was led to think, My God is strengthening me for some trial. And not many days afterwards I was led into one of the most painful places I think I have ever been into; but *such* a blessed one! I never felt nearer to my Jesus, nor found Him more precious. He was pleased in His love and goodness to let me receive a wound in my feelings from one of His Own people who is very dear to me; but no words can

tell the kind and tender manner in which our Jesus was present to heal.

My dear friend, I must say, and that from deep-felt experience, that it is most blessed to be made entirely willing to suffer in the midst of pain; to feel that we would not if we could alter one single thing; to be brought to see that it is our "God of love" Who has appointed our every cross. O the sweet and blessed fellowship with Jesus that is felt! and the words He spoke with His Own voice to me: "If ye *suffer* with Him, ye shall also reign with Him;" and "as ye are partakers of the *sufferings*, so shall ye also be of the *consolations*. And who ever suffered from wounded love as our Emmanuel did? and what but His Mighty power can make us willing to be in the like place? and what but His grace can make us love the hand that gives the wound? Well, every fresh place I am led into makes me more in love with all the ways of our covenant God and Father. I feel as if all prayer might be summed up into one: "Make me willing." O my Jesus, Thou, and only Thou, canst teach us with our hearts to say "*Thy will be done.*" And He did (and does now) teach His disciples thus to pray. My dear brother knows better than I can set forth, the wonderful power that comes with some of the simplest words when He speaks them. I think I told you in my last letter what fresh beauty I had seen in words that were very familiar, when Jesus said to me, "Learn of Me." Again and again those words have drawn my heart up in cries for His teachings. O but I can't tell you one half, nor a quarter what I want; but I do sometimes entreat of the Lord Himself to show you the wonders He shows me. Many times within the last few months the Lord has given me earnest cries for you: and you know, and so do I, that He does not put prayers in our hearts and then not answer them.

Besides what I have just been telling you of my dear Lord's dealings with me, He has led in another trying path. In one week my eldest sister and her husband were summoned from this world. The death of my brother-in-law was expected, but there was no anxiety about my sister till the last day of the year, when she was seized with a stroke of apoplexy and died on New Year's day—her husband following on the 8th. I was not with them, as they died in Devonshire. It is impossible I should say what "a present help in time of trouble" I found my God; such a refuge, strong support, "never failing Friend." And when I saw others with no God to help or to go to in trouble, O how I was brought low in love and wonder that He had made Himself known to me, so that I could say and feel in full confidence, "The Lord is my God." My dear friend, do stop and say, "We do love and adore Him more than ever!" "O what wonders love has done!" and



how grace triumphs over nature. I could not have believed, without proving it, that the Lord could and would hush every rising fear and anxiety ; for I had seen nothing to make me hope either of my lost relatives had ever had a desire towards the Lord : but He brought me to rest perfectly satisfied that every one of His chosen would be saved, and He would not let me think I had more love than He had, to desire any but the number given to Christ *ought* to be saved. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" But before these awful and striking events took place amongst us, my God had made both Charlotte Maidlow and me sensible that something more than ordinary was coming. He had so prepared us, and kept us watching and waiting, and had led us into so many beautiful verses which speak of "Help," that we several times said we were going into a place where especial help would be required, and truly He was "a Help." "I have laid help on One that is mighty." O dear brother what treasures are laid up in our Jesus ! and He often shows me we can only honor Him by *receiving* out of His fulness. He will, He does keep raising our expectations : we are, and shall be more abundantly satisfied with His goodness.

Are you expecting great things ? You wrote a great thing to me in the letter before your last, it has many times come to my mind. You said, "I expect to enjoy all this faithful God has promised : " and O what a boundless store is that ! what limit can you set ? Tell me if there is any limit. Again and again have I been lost when the blessed Spirit has been showing what we may expect, what our precious Jesus has given us *the right* to expect. I do love to lose sight of self and the creature, and with a single eye to see "none but Jesus," when we are contemplating how we are to be dealt with. I have a sort of shudder (and I believe you will know why), when the suggestion is put forth, "O but we are so unworthy." Yes, but is Jesus unworthy ? and are not we one with Him ? O that I could tell you the things He has told me of the eternal indissoluble union between Christ and His Church ; but He has told you Himself and will tell you, and me too, yet more and more about it. "From everlasting to everlasting,"—and He has said, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder." And we may say with Paul, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life," &c., &c. I will not say I envy you, but very often I think, What happiness for Mr. Welland, to be called to set forth the wonders of the love of Jesus ! O may He draw your heart and affections more and more to Himself, make you willing to be just what He pleases, to go where He leads, to give up all He sees good to take. And I know He takes and withholds nothing but what He makes up more than a hundred fold, as He has promised. O press forward, casting away every weight. We little conceive of the treasures awaiting us. Even the

sips by faith are beyond what we can think, except just while we are tasting. Soon we shall see Him, and no cloud between ; soon we shall join in the ocean of love. Well I must stop, but very unwillingly. Do (the Lord enabling you) write when you have the opportunity. Why should our pens and tongues be still, when we have such things to write and speak of? Your last letter was just rightly timed (to the Lord be the praise). It came with some letters that brought us heavy tidings of death, and after reading those and then your's, O what I saw of the contrast between those who have the Lord for their portion, and those who know Him not ! The children of Israel have light in their dwellings ; and what darkness elsewhere ! The night before I read your letter I went to my God with a sinking heart, and He said, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Comfort came thus my dear brother. My time is gone. All friends here would send love if they knew I were writing. My kind Christian love to you and to Mrs. Welland. Do expect great things ; and they can only be received by faith. "Only believe." It is His gift, not our work : this makes it sure to us. "Lord, increase our faith," and I am not afraid (just now) to say "Try it." I like to have it proved.

Dear Brother, forgive if I have made mistakes. I have hurried.

Yours, in the best bonds,

Mr. Welland.

MARY GREENWOOD.

## THE CLAIMED JEWELS.

*(Continued from page 46.)*

This fifteenth verse (Malachi iii.) has been quoted with vehemence by myself, feeling the words to be true to the letter in my case. Alas ! when the devil can picture a case seeming to correspond with this, of the proud being happy and the wicked being set up and even those who tempt God being delivered, he so far gains his ends. Depend upon it, there needs only two to come to fearful conclusions,—that is the devil and one's self. What fuming and fretting are we the subjects of, under such circumstances, when left in Satan's hands ! We come now to the portion taken as a text : "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels : and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." We have here : 1st, the people, "*they* : " 2ndly, *whose* they are—"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord : " 3rdly, *what* they are, "My jewels : " 4thly, His *mercy* towards them, "I will *spare* them : " 5th, and lastly, the time, "*when* I make up My jewels."

1st. "The people." Perhaps there are more mistakes made under this head than any other, because character is altogether left out of the question by most preachers in our day. I could not *invite* people to come to and accept Christ—much less invite *all*—as it is the Spirit's prerogative alone to invite. I ought rather to have said it is His work to call by grace: as He does not waste His words in inviting, but He calls effectually. "They." Who are they? The preceding verse tells us: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." We have in this verse the characters clearly marked out. "They that feared Him." It is not all that name the name of Christ that have a filial fear. Turn to Matt. vii. 21: "Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." Therefore, let those who name His name examine themselves, and see whether they be in the faith or not; for of all deceptions that are possible to be experienced, that is the most awful of all—to think they are going to heaven, when they are on the broad road to hell. Listen to our Saviour's Own words in Matt. vii. 22, 23, "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." It is possible to do all Christ here says of them, and to be "workers of iniquity." They may preach, and it may be all flesh, pride may be at the bottom. Read the first three verses of the xiii. of the 1st of Corinthians. They may speak with not only tongues of men, but of angels, and prophesy, and understand all mysteries, have all knowledge, and such a faith as to remove mountains, and then give all their goods to feed the poor, and their body to be burned, yet all to *profit them nothing*—if uncalled by grace! Therefore, the character here marked out is: "Them that fear the Lord and think upon His name." The Lord does not forget them. It is added, they "spake often one to another." We certainly do not find so much freedom with fellow-saints as we could wish; still, there are those who do speak together, and the Lord hears them and remembers them. A friend of mine, who I believe is now in glory, once told me, after a person had preached from these words, this friend told him it ought to be now read "seldom" instead of "often." Although there was too much ground for the remark, still it is not always the case, and there is this consolation, it will not be so up yonder; there will be no jarring notes there.

Again, "*they*." Who are they? Turn to Zephaniah iii. 12, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." They are brought to have no confidence in the flesh: not that they are all brought from their own works, as it were, in a moment. Some are almost all their lives hanging (more or less) on their own conduct; others are brought from it speedily—but all shall "trust in the name of the Lord." Take another passage referring to the people in Isaiah liv. 11: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." They are also despised. But is not that suffering with Christ? We read of His being "despised and rejected," &c. They are often ridiculed for being afflicted, and tossed about, and having no comfort. This same person (referred to at the commencement) told me my religion, he believed, made me miserable, but it ought (he said) to make me happy. I acknowledge freely (with the Apostle Paul), "If in this life only I have hope, then am I of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. But, coming to facts, does this happiness, spoken of by the above person, wean from the world, and lead to Christ? If so, he was right: if not, there is a needs-be for these afflictions and temptations, in order to wean from sin and self and lead to a precious Christ. He also quoted a portion from Paul's epistle: "Rejoice always, and again I say rejoice," Philippians iv. 4. I see it is a misquotation by one of us. It reads: "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say rejoice." Such people do not give it one moment's thought that we are not always in Christ (feelingly) as we could wish. But how can we take such passages literally? If so, we must rejoice when asleep, as well as when awake. But some have no changes, therefore they fear not God. They are always on the mount—of which I know but little at present, but hope it is to come. His quotation reminds me of some trash I heard repeated by a free-grace man *professedly*, which was this, that when some Wesleyan ministers met to settle the meaning of this portion, "Pray without ceasing," some said one thing, and some said another, and a little servant maid, hearing their conversation, put them all to silence, by saying, when she got out of bed she prayed, whilst dressing also; then, whilst washing and dressing the children, till she pretty well brought in every incident through the day, and prayed throughout it all. But the narrator said nothing about the time during sleep. I forget what he said she prayed for in each circumstance; but, for my own part, give me a *duty* like that, and I am afraid I should soon be as rebellious as the devil could make me.

I like the free-will offering: that is, when there are both heart and will. I do not mean Arminian trash; but, just for one

moment, should this come into the hands of an Arminian, let him not think I cut him off root and branch, as I am fully persuaded that thousands of the Lord's people are as full of Arminianism as it is possible to be. And He does not bring them out of it all at once, but it is generally "here a little and there a little." The hearts of many of His people are right, but not their heads. I for one have no right to use the pruning knife, in the matter, as I was once as rank an Arminian as most, and should have been so now had I been left more to flesh and sense. Before leaving this part of the subject, I would just refer to one more portion in reference to character, which will be found in Rom. viii. and the latter part of the 17th verse: "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together," proving that those who suffer for His sake are the people spoken of as "*they*." It has been well said 'No cross, no crown!' I should like to have said more, but must leave this part and go to the second: namely, *whose* they are, "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord."

*(To be continued.)*

## "CHRIST THE LORD."

### PART 2.

*(Concluded from page 47.)*

On Him the Spirit like a Dove shall rest ;	Before the fire of His all-searching eye
In Him the nations of the earth be blest ;	Satan shall crouch, the hypocrite shall fly ;
The deaf shall hear the everlasting word,	The laurel wither in the crown of pride,
The dumb shall sing the praises of the Lord ;	And sin detested to the thicket glide—
The blind in paths of wisdom shall be led,	Not there to rest, but with her crooked sire
The dead revive, and feed on living bread ;	To breed new evil, and with man conspire
The lame shall dance, the prisoner go free,	Against the Lord and his anointed Son,
The debtor hail the year of jubilee.	The Heir of all things, and the Holy One.
Where serpents bask, or brambles intertwine,	But all hell's outpoured malice, without loss,
Shall smile the fir, the myrtle, and the vine ;	He shall endure in triumph on the cross ;
Where desolation sweeps the naked rock,	Its powers and principalities o'erthrow,
Shall rest the shepherd with his peaceful flock ;	And spoil and gibbet them in open show ;
And in the wilderness a garden rise—	And found His kingdom, which shall never cease,
The sure, the true, perennial Paradise.	In love, in power, in blood, in righteousness, in peace.

Red Hill,  
26th September, 1881.

C.H.M.

## LETTER BY THE LATE MR. G. STEDMAN.

Jireh Lodge, Sept. 13, 1880.

Dear Brother,—



COULD sympathize with you in your weak state of health, being very poorly myself, so as to be laid by two Sundays, and yesterday had many fears in going into the pulpit from extreme weakness. The affliction had its foundation laid 12 months ago last January, when I was seized while in London with inflamed throat, followed by bronchitis, and afterwards congestion of the liver—the effects of which I have more or less felt ever since. It reached gradually to such a crisis that I could relish (though this had continued months) nothing I ate; that taking food was loathsome to me, and I lost flesh and strength too rapidly. A few weeks ago (four, perhaps) I found my relish for food returned, and ate some solid (having taken only slops for a fortnight); but found it lie in the stomach two or three days, and at length come back the same way it went in, and as it went, undigested, so that I was fairly spent as to strength; and very depressed in spirit, and dark in soul, with a heavy dull pain at pit of stomach like a hard ball, or bar of iron. The Lord was hidden; prayer I had none,—I mean feelingly. No cry; no outpouring, faithless, and full of misery and anguish of soul, I felt as a forsaken bough. Past, present and future afforded no traces of the love of a covenant God—sensibly, I mean; Satan labouring hard, and he found many in my wretched heart that held with him. This lasted till Sunday week, when on my bed reading 27th and 28th Pss. In the former, the light of heaven beamed, and sprung up in my heart, so that I felt relief, and was encouraged and enabled to get near the throne; and from that time favoured in soul to tell the Lord all, and to entreat His face. I do think I understand the path in the last Psalm, believing God heard and answered prayer yesterday to my great consolation, in exceeding, by His help, both in respect to the body and especially the soul, and the ease with which I spoke surprised me. I felt more comfortable myself after twice speaking and then breaking bread, than for many weeks, and to-day feel stronger. God is good. We have a good, kind, wise, and gracious Master. I am such a fool that my iniquities need His fatherly correction: and He lays it on me, and enables me to try and lay my shoulders bare: entreating Him, “Correct me; but not in anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing.” Humble me, not to despise Thy rod, nor faint beneath Thy chastening hand.’ It has been good for me: I feel a hope at least it has.

But so much of self again puts itself forth. I must introduce the object of my writing, viz., to enquire how you are now. I hope the Lord has had mercy on you in restoring your health and strength again, and that on reading this you may have some ground suffi-

cient to enable you to engage yourself to visit us here on the 26th inst. If you can, it will afford myself and the friends great satisfaction, and by God's blessing they will have to bless Him too, for inclining you to once more bear testimony to His love, faithfulness, and power.

Do, if you can. The change may be beneficial to you, and if you can get away for a few days to prolong your stay here, I should be glad to entertain you, having a spare bed and a place at table for you, and I think I may say a hearty welcome.


My wife unites in love to you, and begging an interest in your prayers,

I remain, affectionately yours in Christ,

GEO. STEDMAN.

## WORLDLY PLEASURES.

### THE THEATRE.

 HAT fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" is a question which often occurs to my mind, as it reverts to the foolish and sinful pleasures of my youth; while the solemn declaration added: "for the end of those things is death," reminds me of the debt due to Sovereign Grace, for having enabled me to escape "the corruption that is in the world through lust." And how wide-spread and diversified is that lust," or EVIL DESIRE! Assuming all manner of fantastic and enticing forms and ways, it appeals to all the senses of the flesh, and clamours for indulgence; while it keeps carefully in the background "the end of all these things," which the Apostle declares to be DEATH. And true it is, to say nothing of the eternal death, that in a literal and physical sense—

"Death's thousand doors stand open."

When we read of the appalling catastrophe at the theatre in Vienna, at the burning of which about seven hundred persons lost their lives by fire, smoke, and being trampled upon; and of various other instances in which true or false alarms have been raised (some since the above fearful incident), to the jeopardising of the lives of those present, it shows us how close a connection there is between carnal pleasures and grim "death." Every one for himself and none for his neighbour, is the usual prevailing law on such dreadful occasions. And though at a fire in a so-called sacred building, similar feelings and conduct might be exhibited, leading to most disastrous results, yet the difference in the company and the place (supposing it to be one of the Lord's honoured temples), gives a different character to the whole.

It was the delight of my youth to frequent, at every opportunity, the various theatres of London, though warned by an aged and godly relation that probably some day the roof would fall in upon and crush me. This not seldom put me about awhile when in the place, until amid its exciting scenes I forgot the warning. But never shall I cease to remember how narrowly I escaped being suffocated by the pressure of a huge crowd, while struggling to get into a narrow doorway at Sadler's Wells Theatre, whither I had gone with a relation to see a popular drama performed. I fought for my very life, and called as well as able for mercy from those who so cruelly thronged me? But what cared they? No: "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel;" and to them it was more important that they should not lose an inch of the ground they had gained, than that I should escape death. How I resolved then that if I got out safely I would never enter a theatre again; but whether I kept my vow or not, I can hardly remember. Be that as it may, from the time the Lord met with me He made the place a "Magor-misabib"—"a terror round about"—to me.

Ah! there is something truly awful in being summoned into eternity from a play-house. To go from all the specious mockery, and gewgaws, the pompous array in scenes and language for "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," and the company of the coldly moral and openly vicious, to stand before the tribunal of our Maker and our Judge. Never have I, notwithstanding all the special pleading for *the moral lessons to be learnt at a theatre*, and with all the many times I entered within its walls, been privileged to come in contact with those who could honestly testify to the benefit received from its best of performances. I have known many strictly moral go there; but they were moral in spite of it, and not because of it.

But of all things, to see a movement among the clergy and dissenting ministers to bring about a union between the pulpit and the theatre! To find in a large conference a paper read advocating the stage as an adjunct to the teachings of the Word of God; and not a voice to be heard protesting against it! Can we be surprised that at such a time the Lord's voice is heard speaking amid the fire at the Vienna Theatre, and in the threatening alarm at that of Leeds, and at the Grecian Saloon in England, &c.? And what does it say? "The end of such things is DEATH." Shame on men arrayed in pulpit attire, and who name the name of Christ, for their unhallowed device. Let Baal plead for himself. The ungodly will have their carnal pleasures; and among their throng will ever be found many who, on the Lord's Day, attend for duty and form's sake some church or chapel, while their hearts' cry, "When will the



Sabbath be gone, that we may buy and sell, and go to our preferred theatre, opera, casino, music-hall," &c. But woe unto those blind guides! who lead them by their sanction and approbation in this merry dance of death.

For my own part, having "known the terrors of the Lord," and the constraint of the love of Christ, the theatre could *now* afford no pleasure or bait for me. "This is the way to the pit,"—words which may be seen at most theatres, and which arrested Cennick when he was going thither, and led to his conversion—convey a solemn admonition to those who wisely ponder them. Of God's house my heart certainly says—

"There my best friends, my kindred dwell,  
There God my Saviour reigns."

And while often under a cloud, I cannot forget that bright and blessed Sun of Righteousness, Whose rays have from time to time beamed upon me, since they sent me forth from nature's darkness and the shadow of death, and broke my bands asunder. And as one of the company of those "who fear the Lord and think upon His name," my heart's desire is that of David: "Gather not my soul with sinners." Grace has dissolved my connection with the theatre and its patronizers, and as the friend of this world is an enemy of God, so will the friend of God (a true Abrahamite) be an enemy of all those things, "the end whereof is DEATH," seeing that his peace and happiness consist in the enjoyment of Christ's presence and favour, in which is LIFE.

Z.A.O.

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### "SPEAK TO MY HEART."

*"The companions hearken to Thy voice, cause me to hear it."*—Cant. viii. 13.

*"I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak to her heart."*—Hosea ii. 14, margin.

*"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."*—Job xxiii. 12.

Speak to my heart, my gracious, loving Friend,  
Words warm and glowing, dropping comfort there;  
Let Thine own dew on my *hard heart* descend,  
For oft I feel Thy words to me are *rare*.

*More often* would I feel Thine arm of love  
Encircling my soul, and drawing me  
To Thine own breast, revealing "things above;"  
Yes, *there* it is, Lord, I would oftener be.

'Tis *there* I find the balm that soothes my soul;  
'Tis *there* my heart is cheered and I am fed;  
'Tis *there* I learn how Thou canst make me whole;  
*'Here* I can praise Thee for the feast that's spread.

*Cause me to hear Thy voice, Lord, even me ;*

*Others have heard it, I would do so too.*

'Tis in Thy presence I would ever be  
Hearing Thy words, long as I walk below.

No word of man can thrill my soul like *Thine* ;

I'm barren, cold and lifeless under all ;

Did ever one possess a heart like mine ?

*One word* I crave,—Lord, hear me when I call.

Tell me I'm washed in Thy most precious blood

And free from stain. Clothed in Thy righteousness

Complete in Thee I stand before my God,

Thou art my Advocate—my Great High Priest.

Without *THEE*, Lord, I wander, sin, and fall ;

My nature's vile, I cannot stand before

The tempter—hear me, O my All in all,

Put him to flight and save Thy child once more.

Thy *WORD* is pow'r and life, it warms my heart ;

Grace, mercy, peace and joy it brings to me ;

It tells of love which will not from me part,

In spite of the returns I make to Thee.

Nought I possess, Lord, *nothing* can I give ;

My prayers are Thine, my faith, my love, my all ;

Still of Thy fulness let Thy child receive,

*Speak to my heart, Lord, let what will befall.*

K.B.

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### FURNACE WORK.

January 21, 1882.

My dear Friend,



SOME of my friends have asked, "How is it we never hear from you through the *Advocate* ?" Will you allow me a little space in your columns to tell them that 'tis not for want of affection nor yet for matter, but silence to a great extent seems imposed upon me. But I hope the day will come when the things spoken in the closet will be proclaimed upon the house-tops. We are living in awful days ; and if things grow worse for the next five years, as rapidly as they have for the last ten, what a state shall we be in ? The sun is going down over the prophets, and we

"Do not so for nothing grieve,

Alas ! there's worse than nothing here."

I am at a complete loss to form a correct judgment of my own case, trials, exercises, and experience. I have much indeed to be grateful for. He does not deal with me as my cruel sins deserve, nor reward me according to my iniquity. But were things internally better than they are, or different to what they are, I should be still more at a loss than I am to comprehend the meaning of por-

tions of the word which have again and again been sealed upon my soul with divine power. I find that *faith* must be *tried* before it can be crowned ; and when we ask for faith we indirectly ask for trial. When a sweet promise is sealed upon the soul of a child of grace he thinks it will soon come,—in a few days or weeks. But look, it has to be put into the fire first ; death must come upon it, and upon all the means which lead to it. Indeed, whenever a promise is made to me, while I do rejoice at the kind notice God is pleased to take of me, and bless Him for it too, yet I begin to tremble for the consequences. Faith is not a solitary grace. It works in unison with patience, submission, hope, trust, and charity, and each of these graces will come to the front. That which tries me most just now is, is what I have felt, and thought to be true humility, really such. If so, I know from the word what the issue will be. Perhaps some able pen will tell us what real humility is. God, Who searches all hearts, knoweth that I do not exaggerate one point when I say, that most of the time since June, 1880, I have not known how to abase myself enough in His sight.

It thus came about. I was one morning reading Proverbs vi. and when I came to the 3rd verse I was powerfully arrested : “ Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy Friend ; go, *humble* thyself, and so shalt thou prevail with thy Friend.” At first sight I said, “ No ; I’ve nothing to humble myself about.” Of course I was looking at men, and felt that before them I could no more bow than Mordecai before Haman ; yet the words took stronger and firmer hold : “ Go, humble thyself ” ! O how I fell upon my knees before Him, and begged for instruction ; for “ My son ” gave a sacred charm to the verse. And while pleading before Him, a sacred and holy light fell upon the clause, “ When thou art come into the hand of thy Friend.” O, how I saw in a moment that it was *His* hand :—

“ They are the sword,  
The hand is Thine.”

O how I begged Him then to work the required humility in my heart, and never was prayer more speedily answered. He at once (so to speak) turned me inside out, and showed me in some degree what a base, vile, deceitful heart I had, and from my inmost soul I cried out, “ Behold, I am vile.” Oh how deeply I now used the words of Isaiah : “ Woe is me ! because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips : *for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.*” Up to that date I built my hope (to a wide extent) of deliverance upon my innocence and the injustice of men ; but these towers fell, and I fell too, flat before Him. Oh what had I to confess, and humbly acknowledge in

the dust of self-abasement before His feet ! and how I kissed the rod and justified its use. How now about self-vindication ? I could not entertain it ; but only stand amazed at the long-suffering and forbearance of the Lord with such a wretch. Oh how glad I was that I had never taken the steps to clear myself so many had advised me to take. I said, I deserve it all, and ten thousand times more.

It is the easiest thing in the world to sing Hart's words :—

“ When the heart disclosed betrays  
All its hid disorders—  
Enmity to God's right ways,  
Blasphemies and murders,” &c.

But it is a very different thing to be brought into the reality ; to look at one's self with abhorrence and disgust. Oh, without the blood of sprinkling how certain it is that eternal perdition would be our lot. “ The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart,” Heb. iv. 12. For many months this kind of exercise lasted, and still lasts. Jacob's words fit me well : “ I am not worthy of the *least* of Thy mercies : ” and David's too, “ If He delight in me, He will bring me again, and show me both it and His glory : but if He say thus, I have no delight in thee, behold here I am : let Him do as seemeth good in His sight.” I cannot persuade myself that I could have produced this state of soul ; nor do I believe I could keep myself in it for one hour. The vi. of Prov. vers. 3, is a precept, and precepts can only be obeyed under the influence of the dear Holy Spirit. He who makes the promise effectual, must also make the precept effectual, or both remain but a dead letter. Here let me repose till He is pleased to fulfil His sweet word : “ I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” I know that what is His own work He will smile upon and honour, and He chastens whom He loves. These facts often bear me up. It is close work to be completely stripped ; yet it is needful work. The Lord will, as He has done, and is still doing with me, sink the ploughshare deep into the heart, and gash after gash will He make, and discover what is lying beneath the surface. “ Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow ? ” Yes, He does ; and “ when He has made plain the face thereof He casts in the principal wheat.” God's dear people shall make no mistake between His righteousness and their own : for theirs shall be manifest as “ filthy rags ; ” and their iniquities, like the wind, shall carry them away. But His ! Ah, that shall appear in its superlative grandeur : “ I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of *Thine only*.”

"None but Jesus  
Can do helpless sinners good.

What a truth ! felt or not felt. But those who have felt it can attest it ; the rest take it for granted because Mr. Hart said it.

Thus, dear friends, I have given you a few little hints (and they are but hints) of the path I have for some time trodden, and I know these lines will fall into the hands of many whom I love in the truth. Will such of you who have at times ministered to my necessities accept my hearty thanks for your great kindnesses. Though deeply tried in Providence I dare not complain. I am out of hell, and through the mercy of the Triune Jehovah, I believe I shall be with Him when my work is done. Then, "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" I often wonder why I am kept in this "desert place;" but "God is His Own interpreter, and He will make it plain." Oh may He, of His will, this year make darkness light, and crooked things straight;" and till He does may He keep me low at His dear feet: for I have so many proofs of the untrustworthiness of my own heart, that I should be just as wise to trust Satan as it. A sweet hope, sometimes, cheers me, and leads me to expect that "when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." To my ministerial brethren I send my best and warmest greetings. Expect the wrath of the foe, but expect the aid of the Captain. And when well with you may God help you to remember

Yours affectionately,

Wadhurst.

W. WINSLOW.

### THE SAVING APPOINTMENT.

A SERMON BY MR. GRACE,

PREACHED AT WEST STREET CHAPEL, BRIGHTON, ON SUNDAY MORNING,  
DEC. 28, 1851.

*"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."*—1 Thess. v. 9, 10.



NOW this text applies not to the world at large, but to certain characters, whom the apostle has in a very striking manner designated and set forth in the epistle which he is writing to the church of God at Thessalonica, or the church of the Thessalonians. They are "in"—mark the expression—"IN God the Father, and IN the Lord Jesus Christ." All through the epistles of Paul, and through the Word of God, there is one glorious doctrine maintained: that is, the eternal union of the church with Christ, and God the Father, and the Holy Ghost. I look at them as one Divine essence; therefore, if I am in Christ, I

am in God the Father and in the Holy Ghost. Christ says, "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be one in Us."

Speaking of God the Father and His elect. Now these are the persons to whom the apostle writes this, and he gives us to know by certain evidences how we are in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now you know that election is a doctrine that is clearly set forth in the scriptures of truth; but while, as our poet Hart knew, so you, if you are taught of God, have no hesitation in saying that you believe with your heart, that "God's election is a truth" that shines as a sunbeam through the scriptures of truth, yet you add with the poet:

"Though God's election is a truth,  
Small comfort there I see,  
Till I am told by God's Own mouth  
That He has chosen me."

If you look into the 1st chapter of this epistle, you will see that the apostle writes particularly on this subject: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." Well, Paul, how do you know it? or how are they to know it? "For our gospel came not to you in word only, but in power." There is the grand difference of hearing and preaching God's truth. Many hear the truth of God with the outward ear, but never with the mental hear of the soul; it is never attended with Divine power in their heart. The apostle says, "Our gospel came not to you in word only, but in power."

Now, there are many who receive the word, and they receive it with joy; but by and by a time of temptation comes, and they fall away, and their religion is gone. But you may depend upon it, where the word is received "with much affliction," it will follow you, poor soul, let you be where you will, and it will be "with joy of the Holy Ghost."

We read of the first coming of our Lord, and He was long looked for; and He was set forth by all the Jews that were indulged by the Spirit of God, and they saw Christ in all the sacrifices in which He was offered. "Abraham desired to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad." He came in deep humiliation and infinite love to us poor sinners; took our nature upon Him, and became, though the Ancient of Days, the infant of days,—born in a manger! Ah, my friends, Hart is well to the point in one verse of his Christmas hymn. I am sure it is a truth; and if you are taught of God you will acknowledge it. It is said there was no room in the inn. What for? To show the deep humiliation. Hart says:—

"The crowded inn, like sinners' hearts,  
(O ignorance extreme!)  
For other guests of various sorts  
Had room, but none for Him!"

Now, your heart and mine, by nature, had room for every guest and every evil, and every abomination, but there was no room in our hearts for Him. We are no better in standing than the Jews. "For He came to His own, and His own received Him not: but to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." When He appeared on the earth the first time it was to take away His people's sins; and He did so, and put them out of the way, nailing our transgressions to the cross. And when He bowed His blessed head and said, "It is finished!" there was an end made of sin; and that text has been, and shall be blessedly fulfilled: "The sins of Israel shall be sought for, and shall not be found." Payment for any debt cannot be made twice—

"First at the bleeding Surety's hands,  
And then again at mine."

Christ has made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Now I believe, through the grace of God, that Jesus Christ appeared on this earth for this end; and after He had finished His work, He then demanded a rightful entrance into His kingdom, as described in the 24th Psalm: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle."

Therefore,—and I speak it with reverence and with humility, and yet with full confidence in what I am going to assert—if there had been one sin of the church unatoned for, at Christ's entrance into heaven the gates would have been shut against Him; and if against Him, against us. And how could He have said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do?" By His own power He arose from the dead and ascended up on high; and what is blessed to conceive is, "He has received gifts for men." For good men? No; for rebellious men! Gifts for you and for me—rebels and rebellious as we are. For our rebellion? No; but of His own sovereign grace. This is my creed.

I also believe in the doctrine that the apostle here writes to the church of the Thessalonians about, in reference to the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that "He shall come again without sin unto salvation." Now, in the 2nd chapter and last verse, if I am not mistaken, we have the second coming of Christ spoken of: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" And in the chapter preceding the one from which I have taken the text, the apostle gives an exhortation "not to sorrow" for the godly dead "as those who have no hope: "For I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe

that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him," &c. And so to end of chapter.

Do you know, dear friends, that I like reading such portions as this. I tell you what it reminds me of. Sometimes when I read the blessed scriptures of truth, and read my interest in them, it is like an old man,—or a young man, if you like,—who, to gratify a feeling he may possess, will go to his iron chest and take out certain deeds and parchments. He looks at them and reads them, and he says, "This property is mine; there is no incumbrance on it. I have a right and title to it, and these are my evidences." Well, I bless my God that, though I have not many title deeds to property of an earthly nature, yet I can read my Bible, and read my Father's name in it, and my right and title to that blessed reversion that is laid up for me. Do you ever take up the Bible in this way? "Yes," says some poor child of God, "I do; but the book is dark and sealed. I read; but though the promise meets my eye, it will not reach my case." Well, then, let me say it is good for us sometimes to look over the inventory of the things that belong to us. "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord." Now mark, "We—not you, not them—we that are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep." (To prevent, signifies that we shall not go before them.) "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Mark further, they that are the dead that died in Christ shall rise first in Christ. Now, if there is not a living in Christ, and a dying in Christ, there will never be a rising in Christ. There is a first resurrection; and blessed is he that hath a part in it. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

My dear friends, I do not know what your feelings or thoughts may be on this matter, to be for ever with the Lord. No more going out; no more sin; no more separation; "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." What does He say then? "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

To talk about the things of God, and those things that are connected with our eternal salvation, how very much better than to be talking of Mr. So-and-so and Mrs. So-and-so, or this great man or the other great man. Bless you, I don't want to know anything about it. I would not give you a 'thank ye' to go into any person's house in the world, if all they have got to talk about is this great man or the other great man. I am quite satisfied that every one that is quickened of God has enough to talk about in-doors. Now, then, the apostle says: "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye



have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." What times and seasons? Why, we shall come to judgment. What think you, poor soul? Why, if not interested in the first resurrection, it will be an awful case with you when the books come to be opened. Take notice here, the apostle keeps up a grand distinction in this chapter, and separates, as every one that is here is separated, into two parties. There is no intermediate line; no third class. They and you are either "the children of the day" or "the children of the night;" either "children of light" or "children of darkness." That is the grand distinction the apostle keeps up. "Ye are all the children of the light and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness."

Now, let us just notice, that all by nature are children of darkness: and we continue in that darkness until it pleases God of His sovereign mercy to deliver us therefrom, and bring us into His marvellous light. Now mark, although this has a reference to Gentile nations, it has a reference to every poor sinner that is enlightened by grace and the Spirit of God. "The people that sat in darkness saw a great light." "The light shone in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not." That was a distinguishing mark between the Egyptians and the Israel of God: for while the Egyptians had total darkness, the children of Israel had light in their dwellings; and therefore they were emblems of God's spiritual children when He brings them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Christ says, "I am the light of the world."

As soon as the grace of God in regenerating power is felt in the heart, this text is exemplified: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hands." The effects of that light and life are communicated to the poor sinner, now blessed to experience what Christ said when going to Lazarus to raise him from sleep, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." Why does he stumble? Because there is no light in him. Why do we see poor sinners stumbling at the divinity of Christ? stumbling at the doctrine of the Trinity; stumbling at the incarnation of the Son of God? Why do we see persons in the profession of religion still walking in darkness and sin? Because they have no light in them. So there are children of darkness and children of light, and they are to be perceived.

*(To be concluded, D.V., next month.)*

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## PERSONAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A VILLAGE PASTOR OF THREE-SCORE AND TEN.

January 5, 1882.

Dear Sir,—

I cannot express what I felt when I read your "Characteristics of the present Age;" so sound, so straightforward a delineation of the state of the professing church and the world in the present evil day. Everything appears in confusion; every evil propensity of man's corrupt nature seems to be made manifest. There are, indeed, as the inspired word sets it forth, "Many devices in a man's heart." So many worship, not the God of the Bible, but one of their own or other's imagination: as our former dear Pastor, the Rev. E. Arriot,\* used to tell them, they did not worship the God of the Bible, but one of their own imagination.

I am quite satisfied respecting Mr. R. A\*\*\*\*'s ministry. What various plausible, deadly errors are continually coming forth. When any came to the dear Lord in the days of His flesh to be healed of their maladies He completely restored them—not partially. So it is respecting the new nature, which He forms in His dear people, whom He thought it not too much to shed His precious blood for. He does not do things by halves: as he must, if Mr. A\*\*\*\*'s statements are correct. We cannot understand that he should set forth so great an absurdity, as to say that man's nature, which he brought into the world with him, was made perfectly holy. If not, then, there is when regenerated a partial renewal—having part in its corrupt, evil condition, and making part pure and holy. How opposed to the unerring word. "Behold," says the dear Lord, "I make all things new." I implant in My people a new life-giving principle; or the life which Adam lost when he fell, is restored in Me. In him all die—all have lost Divine life—in Me they have it restored to them. My all-powerful voice calls those who are dead in trespasses and sins into Divine life. They are made new creatures in Me. They are new-born; "Not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed," which can never be destroyed, in consequence of which they are clothed with immortality. "I give unto them eternal life." They bear My image; are "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

By life implanted they feel death in themselves—that is, in the flesh. They did not feel it after a spiritual manner until they received Divine life, neither did they have a right perception of

[\*A Church Clergyman.]

their true condition until light from Him, Who is the light of life, broke in upon them. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them;" for they can only be discerned by the Spirit's enlightening power. How it rejoices the hearts of God's ministers when poor sinners feel death within them; for they are satisfied life has been imparted. Lazarus felt nothing until the Lord's powerful voice called him into life, then he came forth with grave-clothes on. So it is, when life enters a dead soul; they come forth with grave-clothes on. But the Lord of life and glory commands His servants to take off these rags of corruption, and clothe them with change of raiment; and to bring forth that robe which will reflect divinity through the never ending ages of eternity.

But I will not tire your patience, who can handle these subjects so much better than I can. One of my hearers told me of a young man who was living in service at W\*\*\*\*\* with a young lass. My friend's son paid his addresses to her. This young man became very seriously inclined. He used to read, or rather the young woman read to him, he not having much education. He wanted to find the right way. He said he would search until he did find it. He went to S\*\*\*\*\* Church or Chapel, but could not discover it; also to many chapels and places of worship at H\*\*\*\*\*, but it was still undiscovered. He heard of the room at B\*\*\*\*\*, where I have preached. He went there and found the Pearl of Great Price. He has settled down there, and I trust will find that the pasture continues good, and no noxious, erroneous weeds come forth with it. It is my earnest prayer that I may be kept from turning to the right-hand or to the left—a straightforward, not circuitous, course; preaching Christ crucified, though it be to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," though the offence thereof has not ceased.

May you find your hands greatly strengthened and your arms made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. I rejoice that you have not that fear of man which bringeth a snare. The dear minister, who preached three months at H\*'\*'\*\*\* in the early part of 1832, when the rector died, told the hearers to pray for a minister who had not the fear of man before his eyes. May our dear Lord and Master hold up our goings in His paths, that our footsteps slip not. I am so very glad and rejoice that you have set forth the Characteristics of the present Age. My earnest prayer is that the subscribers to the *Gospel Advocate* may benefit by it. May the Great Shepherd of the sheep, Who, of His infinite goodness, called you to the pastorate, still bless your work and labour of love, giving you many seals to your ministry and many souls for your

hire. I thank you for your prayers on my behalf. We unite in christian love and best wishes to thee and thine,

To Mr. Baxter.

Yours in Christ,  
C. H.

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THE WORD WITH POWER.

December, 1881.

My Dear Sir,

Before you leave \*\*\*\*\* I have a desire to tell you a little of the Lord's loving kindness and tender mercy towards me. On Lord's day, before I left home I had been reading in this month's "Sower" a most wonderful thing by Mr. Flavel, called A day in Heaven. While I was walking along the road my heart went out to the Lord that He would in mercy remember me, and enable me to enter into that rest that remains for the people of God; and that He would be pleased to give you a text to confirm me of my interest in redeeming love and dying blood. When you gave out the text, Isaiah xxv. i., I said within myself, "How beautiful!" and something like a gentle voice dropped into my very soul and said, "Do you want anything better than this? I lifted up my eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help, and I exclaimed, "O Lord, Thou art my God!" I had not the shadow of a doubt at the time. Nor do I now believe He will stay in glory and leave me behind,—though you said the greater part of the Lord's people have not arrived at this blessed assurance. But I cannot rest satisfied with anything short of this. In the evening you carried my mind still farther, and I must confess to you, sir, that I was lost in wonder and astonishment. The grandeur of the Gospel so carried my soul away that I was so lost when I left chapel that I could scarcely speak to any one. I did not know what I said. When I went to bed I could not sleep; my meditation was so sweet, I could not help blessing and praising the Lord, Who hath redeemed my life from destruction, and crowned me with loving kindness and tender mercy. "O Lord, I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name, for Thou hast done wonderful things; Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth."

And now may the Lord in rich mercy be with you, and may a double portion of His Spirit rest and abide with you, and that many in \*\*\*\*\* may have to say your labours are not in vain, and that many of the Lord's dear people may be brought to realize the fulness of your text. The Lord give us a parting blessing and crown your labours with success. Pardon me, Sir, if I have intruded on your time.

Yours very sincerely,

Mr. Baxter.

M.

## Letters by the Household of Faith.

### THE PEDIGREE OF MARY LEVITT.

A LETTER BY HERSELF.

Hull, Aug. 31, 1865.

My Dear Sister in Jesus,

I have received yours with great pleasure; it gives me joy to think I have some kindred spirits to converse with, and that you so kindly accept my little scraps, which are simple, but sincere, and from a heart that delights in loving and praising God. A spirit of love and a spirit of praise are the gifts of God, to accompany me all the way home, and to abide with me there in the land of bliss and blessedness. I shall never part with them, no never; they are the very nature and essence of the new principle within, and proceed from the life of God in the soul. They can never decay. I sometimes say,—

“O take Thy pining exile home;  
My soul for earth was never born.”

And yet perhaps when the time comes, when the sovereign will of God calls me home, my old Adam will begin to tremble, and want to cleave to the dust a little longer. But Adam will not be consulted, and I am very glad of it; for when God calls, and says, “Mary, come home,” I must go; and O may I have the response in my heart, ‘I come, my Lord Jesus; I come.’

I was taken very ill one night, I thought I was going. I said to myself, ‘Now then, how do I feel about it?’ I said, ‘Thy sovereign will, my Lord, be done.’ I feel I am a very great coward at meeting death; but strength may be given when the time comes. I have nothing to trust in, nor look to, but the Lord Jesus, the slain Lamb; and it is the Lamb in the morning and the Lamb in the evening. I have nothing else to bring before God, and nothing else is wanted. He is the one offering, and God Himself hath provided this Lamb, and hath made us acceptable in the Beloved. O bless His name, He shall be praised. He is “the praise of all His saints.” “His praise shall be continually in my mouth.” From the altar of my heart may the incense of prayer and praise be going forth through the merits of a bleeding Saviour, “Who ever liveth to make intercession.” He knows what is best for us; “all our times are in His hand.” I am glad they are; I like my times to be in His hand. It reminds me of a dream one night, when the Lord spoke to me. He said, “I will open springs of water and streams in the desert. It shall be desert all the way through, that thou mayest see My hand.” I awoke saying, “Lord, it shall be so.” I

was very pleased with the dream, and with my answer to the Lord. I believe it was all from Him, and many a time I have seen His hand.

“He leads me all my journey through,  
And makes me more than conqueror too.”

“We are more than conquerors through Him that hath loved us,” and we will waive the sheaf before Him.

I will now notice a little about my grandfather Levitt. He had a small farm at West Ella, but he died before I was born. How often I have wished I had lived in his day; I should have been a companion for him. I have heard my father talk so much about him that I could imagine I saw him. The Levitt's family were great singers. There were many sons and daughters; I think ten brothers and sisters. They all attended the Calvinist Chapel at Swanland, which was one mile from West Ella. Grandfather was a very bad sleeper, and often sung hymns in the night; and his sons and daughters and the servant, hearing him singing, used to all join him; for at that time they slept in parlours on the ground floor. I once met an old woman who had lived as servant with them, and she told me the same. She said she never was so happy in all her life, as she was when she lived in that family. I should like to have been with them; it would have just suited me. And so conversant was my grandfather with Dr. Watts' psalms and hymns, that if any one named the first line he knew the second. His name was John Levitt. My mother's father was a shepherd and hind; his name was Marnaduke Bailey,—a man that feared God. His memory is blessed. Both my grandmothers' names were Mary, but I don't know much about them. One of my grandmothers was dead before I was born, and the other died when I was six weeks old. But there was a third grandmother, and her name was Mary,—my mother's step-mother; I remember her very well, because she would not let us go into her garden to get berries at Hessle feast—for she lived at Hessle—and I and my brother used to go to Hessle feast when we were children. My mother's name was Jane, and my father's name was Richard: they are laid in the churchyard at Kirk Ella, amongst a great number of the Levitt family, which has been buried there for generations. I am drawing very near my mother's age; she died at 66, and I shall be 66 if I should be spared until the 17th day of December. I often think this is my last year; I never expected to reach her age; but I must linger until the appointed time.

“And when I'm to die, ‘Receive me,’ I'll cry,  
For Jesus hath loved me; I cannot tell why.  
But this I can find, we two are so join'd,  
He won't be in glory and leave me behind.”

I think they are going on at Bethesda much as usual. I hear Mr. W. twice a week—on Monday and Thursday evenings. Mr. F.'s company are very few: it is very discouraging to the preachers.

And now, my dear friends and sisters, accept my love, and believe me yours in time and throughout eternity, in union to our beloved Lord.

“Closer and closer let us cleave  
To His beloved embrace;  
Out of His fulness still receive,  
And plenteous grace for grace.”

And now, to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

Perhaps I have dwelt too long on my pedigree, if so excuse me.  
Your loving sister,

MARY LEVITT.

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## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

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Make others to see Christ in you—moving, doing, speaking, and thinking. Your *actions* will speak of Him, if He be in you.

Oh, if I could wear this tongue to the stump, in extolling my Lord and Master!

Though you get strokes and frowns from your Lord, yet believe His love more than your own feelings.

How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! As little do I take away of my great sea,—the boundless love of Christ.

There are depths of love in Christ beyond what we have seen, therefore dig deep, and labour, and take pains for Him; and set by as much time in the day for Him as you can. He will be won with labour.--*Rutherford*.

“Sometimes we come to them (the Donatists) saying, “Let us seek the truth, let us find the truth.” They answer, “Keep what you have: thou hast thy sheep, I have mine; forbear to meddle with my sheep, for I do not meddle with thine.” Thanks be to God, the sheep are not mine; the sheep are His! What hath Christ bought? Nay, let them be neither mine, nor thine; but His Who hath bought them, His Who hath marked them. *Neither is he that planted anything, nor he that watereth; but God who giveth the increase.* Why have I mine, and thou thine? If Christ be there, let mine go thither, for they are not mine: if Christ be here, let thine come hither, for they are not thine. Let us kiss head and hands for possessions, and let the strange children perish.”

*Augustine on the Psalms.*

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## AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION :

"SEEMING TO COME SHORT."

Heb. iv. 1.

**T**HE gracious manner in which the Lord has secured the fulfilment of all His purposes and promises in Christ, will be a theme of eternal laudation on the part of His redeemed. The ten thousand ways in which their own weakness and unworthiness are exhibited during their pilgrimage—to *themselves*, if not to *others*,—needed the display of all that foreknowledge and watchful care on the Lord's part, of which all His people from time to time are made deeply sensible, and on which they found so many prayers for sustaining and preserving mercy when their feet are well-nigh slipping.

Very precious was the view the Psalmist had of this when he penned the 121st Psalm, and asserted his "help" as coming "from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." The Omnipotence which accomplished the mighty work of creation was no less, but more gloriously, engaged in the work of salvation. For when He "laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed for ever" (Ps. civ. 5)—that is, "not removed" by the power of men or devils, nor until His purposes of mercy were fully carried out—the corner-stone on which those foundations rested was "Christ, and Him crucified." And the same stability was to be imparted to every vessel of mercy, to his personal and everlasting salvation. For it is written of each: "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." Psalm cxxi. 2—5. What possible contingency can then arise, by which the kept ones shall slip to fall, and fall to break their bones and perish? The deep-laid plots of hell; the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of their own hearts; the subtle flatteries and corroding anxieties in this toilsome, wearying world,—shall they prevail? The sunshine of worldly prosperity, shall it wither up the vital principle within them, and make them willing to part with Christ for the baubles of time? The cold moon-beams of adversity, shall they chill their affections for the God Who tries them, so as to cause them to turn their backs upon His truth and ways? No: "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night," is



the promise (ver. 6). Shall all the special and accumulated evils of this mortal life, backed up by indwelling sin and the power of Satan, carry them away as with a flood? No: "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul," is the affirmation (ver. 7). But amid all the intricate windings of their spiritual and providential pathway; their "going out" to war, their "coming in" for repose, shall no stratagem of the foe succeed in waylaying and destroying them? No: "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore," is the final assurance. (ver. 8).

Such emphatic utterances of everlasting love, come fully within the scope of the apostle's expression, "strong consolation," which he asserts to be the appointed portion of the heirs of grace and glory from their covenant God. Heb. vi. 17. And sweetly does he distinguish between them and those reprobate apostates, who bear the "thorns and briars" only, who are "nigh unto cursing, and whose end is to be burned": saying, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak" (ver. 9). And on what evidences did that persuasion rest? On their love to the brethren—that mark, which John characterises as the proof of having "passed from death unto life." "For," adds Paul, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (ver. 10). This communicating of temporal supplies to the Lord's poor and needy, was thus a "work and labour of LOVE"—"LOVE TO THE BRETHREN;" and when animated by this heavenly principle, the gift of the "cup of cold water" in nowise loses its "reward." It is therefore characteristic of the people of God to "show the proof of their love" to Christ by ministering to His saints, and especially to His heralds of mercy, the preachers of the gospel.

While, however, the Lord's covenant counsels of peace effectually secure the safety of all towards whom His "thoughts of peace and not of evil" extend, and while they are all made to partake of those distinguishing evidences of His Holy Spirit's inward work and workings, which the unregenerate are void of, it is apparent from the Scriptures, and equally so from the complaints and acknowledgments of the Lord's people in general to this day, that they often fail to realise what the Trinity feel towards and have

done for them. The Father's electing love—how they question its choice and hold of them! The Son's redeeming blood and imputed righteousness—how they doubt their interest in these! The Holy Spirit's quickening, enlightening, and leading grace—how often do they apprehend they are strangers to these vital necessities!

- Now the apostle, in Heb. iii. and iv., is dealing in a special way with "the rest" that remains "to the people of God," in contrast with the rest promised in the earthly Canaan to the "Israel according to the flesh." Into the latter tens of thousands never entered, who left Egypt under Moses and traversed the waste howling wilderness for years. "They could not enter in because of unbelief." Heb. iii. 19. The covenant, under which the Lord dealt with them as the natural seed of Abraham, did not *provide FAITH for them*, but left them under contingent stipulations to the powers of nature. As the certain result, they failed to believe, and, consequently, they
- also failed to obey; and hardened their hearts in the day of provocation. "They turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." Ps. lxxviii. 41. They limited both His power and faithfulness. And although a reflection of this limitation in the true believer's day of diffidence will also appear, it does not, as with the fleshly Israel, "reign unto death." For "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," is pledged so to communicate from His fulness "the Spirit of faith," that it is "given them on the behalf of Christ" both to "believe" and "suffer." Phil. i. 29: the faith being necessary that the ordeal of suffering may be endured. The national Israel suffered, but they did not believe; and as the consequence they rebelled to their destruction. But for the most despairing and questioning child of God the power of the Holy Ghost is reserved, to fill them, in the Lord's own time, "with all joy and peace in believing." Rom. xv. 13; so that a bold and decided negative may be given, as the poet intended it should, to the question he proposes;

"Shall babes in Christ, bereft  
Of God's rich gift of faith,  
Be to their own will left,  
And sin the sin to death?  
Shall any child of God be lost,  
And Satan cheat the Holy Ghost?"

"Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter (into the promised rest), and they to whom it was first preached entered

not in because of unbelief, again He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," Heb. iv. 6, 7. This gracious extension of time is "for the elects' sakes," that they may not come short of the promised rest, but "obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," 2 Tim. ii. 10. And this rest they realise in two ways; viz., 1. in Jesus by faith; 2. in heavenly glory with Christ.

To be favoured with the Spirit's witness so as to enjoy union with and acceptance in the Beloved, and to feel "there is now no condemnation," in time or at the bar of God in eternity, how sacred and stable the "rest" it produces. Without this there is no solid confidence—no establishment in the frames and feelings of experience. Only as faith is brought into exercise upon the merits and fulness of the Lord Jesus, only as the soul is enabled to rest in Him, committing all its sins, cares and concerns into His faithful and all-sufficient hands, can it cease from its own works, as God did from His, and enjoy the repose flowing from His finished salvation and everlasting righteousness. And it will not be disputed by any taught of God that, only on the ground of everything being completed by the dear Son of God, will any enter into the heavenly Canaan's rest.

But the particular point with which we have to deal is found in these words of the apostle: "Let us therefore FEAR, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should SEEM to come short of it." Heb. iv. 1. The "REST" being heavenly, and therefore antitypical, the "PROMISE" which sets it forth cannot be conditional, like that associated with the carnal Israel and the earthly Canaan. The spiritual and eternal "REST" being obtained by, in, and through the Redeemer's obedience and sacrifice, the "PROMISE" relating to it must also be IN HIM—and one of the chief of all those which "IN HIM are yea, and IN HIM amen, unto the glory of God by us." There is therefore no possibility of failure either in the Promiser or the promise, and, as the consequence, all the spiritual Israel "must enter" into their appointed "REST."

And yet the apostle appears to hedge and fence this grand assurance round about with a cautionary admonition or exhortation, as if some contingency were involved: "Let us therefore

fear, lest,—any of you should *seem to come short* of it.” We have already shown that he regarded them, by the fruits of the love they displayed towards their needy brethren in Christ, as those to whom the “things that accompany salvation” pertained, and hence, as Abraham’s true seed, and “heirs according to the promise” (chap. vi. 9). Why, then, this careful language? in which, mark, he also includes *himself*—“Let us therefore fear.” Would he have them live the trembling, apprehensive life of legal slaves, and to be always questioning the love and favour of the Lord towards them? Impossible. He rather desires that, with all tenderness of spirit and filial reverence for so good and gracious a covenant God, they *may* ever with lowliness of heart and mind, under a sense of their own sin and weakness, and the superabounding of grace towards them, be animated by a holy jealousy for His honour, and so cleave to Him in private and conduct themselves in public, that they may not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption. The “fear” he desires to be displayed, is that which is described as “a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.” Prov. xiv. 27.

For it is certain that, though sin is so put away by Christ that it can never appear against His redeemed to their condemnation, neither can anything be laid to the charge of God’s elect, as they stand complete in their glorious Head, so as to invalidate their title to the eternal “*REST*,” yet the indulgence of the flesh, in a loose, careless, and worldly deportment, will certainly be attended with a suspension of the Holy Spirit’s witnessing, and the withdrawal of the Lord’s manifestive presence and consolations. And then will holy confidence give place to backwardness at the throne; and this will be succeeded by a cloud which will conceal the brightness of the Lord’s loving countenance. Should Satan then be permitted to assail, and troubles arise in sickness of body and adversity in circumstances, the soul will for a time become an easy prey to a thousand gloomy apprehensions, and “*SEEM*” like one forsaken of his God. And this is the *SEEMING TO COME SHORT* of the rest.

Moreover, in every case in which the Lord’s people fail to read their

“title clear  
To mansions in the skies,”

they “*SEEM* to come short of it.” Wherefore we have this other

important expression of spiritual desire in the same epistle, from the inspired apostle's pen: "And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (chap. vi. 11, 12). And with this agree Peter's words: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter i. 10, 11.

The Lord's name be magnified, there is no danger of His chosen, redeemed, and called people finally *coming short* of anything He has promised, prepared, and secured to them in His dear Son; but there is a *SEEMING* to do so with very many of them; so far as their apprehension and enjoyment are concerned. And while

" 'Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames;  
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's,"

yet it is consummate folly to suppose that the Holy Spirit does not honour His own work; and that when He stirs up His people to "give diligence" in "seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," they reap no blessed fruits from their earnest pursuit after their beloved Lord. Doubtless in most of those instances of persons being highly favoured, there has been a preceding deep experience of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the strength of law and Satan's workings, which the Holy Spirit has overruled for good, by warmly urging them to flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them. And of all the Lord's tried ones it holds good: "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer unto Thee when Thy chastening was upon them." Isaiah xxvi. 16. Nor is it a light matter to be thus under a weight of trouble, and to "*SEEM* to come short" of the Lord's delivering promises and power. But it is the mercy of all God's people that the coming short for a season is but a *SEEMING*—not a *REALITY*. It is but a temporary, not an eternal withholding of the bliss of the inheritance to which they are entitled in Christ. But when the unspeakable nature of that bliss, as enjoyed by faith, is properly apprehended, how should it stimulate those who fear Him to the prayerful and consistent display of that "fear" which the Lord has implanted in their hearts; as it is written: "Wherefore gird up

the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as He which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Peter i. 13—15. The space is indeed narrow between Pharisaic zeal and Antinomian security, as Hart phrases it; but the Holy Spirit can show it. May He deign to do so.

THE EDITOR.

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### THE SAVING APPOINTMENT.

A SERMON BY MR. GRACE,

(Continued from page 90.)

A child of light, who is a child of God, is distinguished from a child of darkness. He may know what it is to walk in darkness, and have no light *shining* in him: but still he is a child of light, though walking in darkness, and that candle which is lit up is the Spirit of God in the heart of the child of God: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of His servant; that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Now here is an exhortation given; therefore, says the apostle, "Let us not sleep as do others." Mind you, there is a sleep of death. Now they may be said to be asleep, when they are insensible to the things of God. And I also know that a child of God may get into a sleepy, careless indifference to the things of God. There is a sleep of the church that is described in the Canticles: "I sleep, but my heart waketh. It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh." Ah, there is a secret something left in the child of God contrary to an unregenerate person. There may be a sleeping, but there is a secret something at the bottom that he possesses, that a mere professor is destitute of. The teaching of God the Holy Ghost he never had nor ever will. What a paradox! "I sleep, but my heart waketh." The heart. I look on the heart as the centre of affection. What is religion without affection? The affection is the first thing that is touched. It was so when God brought poor Ruth out of Moab. Her affection was touched. "Behold, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." That love was given her in Christ, "before the foundation of the world." But, says affection, I will draw her unto Me with the bands of loving kindness. God uses the rod and also the law for His children's chastisement, and by this we are brought to know that the law works nothing but wrath in the sinner's heart. But there is a secret compunction, a secret

something that is not produced by the law. Our affections are touched: there is a grieving for sin—a brokenness of spirit and deep humility are felt that never came from the law. “Let us not sleep as do others: but let us watch and be sober.”

There never was a man more fond of sober-minded people and sober-minded christians than I am. Highty-flitty here-and-there professors I do not like. Ah! but where do you find a man or woman blessedly established in the things of God? The apostle does not write to the church of the Thessalonians meaning that they are not to be drunk with wine. What, drunk! a drunken professor! I trow that it may be said they that sleep, sleep as in the night. I have thought if drunken creatures could have a view when sober of what they are when drunk, surely they would never get drunk again. Ah, bless you! that would not have any effect on them, you may depend upon it. If I am speaking to drunkards, I say, none will ever get into the kingdom of God as a drunkard; drunkenness is a damnable sin. Indeed, say you. Yes, it is; so is every sin without the atoning blood of Christ. The text is not speaking of drunkards; but if I should be speaking in the hearing of any poor soul addicted to this sin, I hope the Lord will give him eyes to see his folly.

You have heard me tell you the story of a godly man that, just as he had taken his text, saw a man come into the chapel drunk: and when he had read his text he pointed to the man and said, “No drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.” It touched his heart; he was sobered at once, and he went home in deep distress of soul and told his wife he was sure to be damned. The poor woman thought she had got another pest. She had had another husband, and he was a Methodist, and she was determined she would never have another Methodist. But she had such a Methodist as she did not dream of; for he was bedridden for 25 years, and died rejoicing in free, sovereign, distinguishing grace.

But, says the apostle: “Not fornicators, nor drunkards, nor thieves,”—no, nor “a covetous man shall ever enter into the kingdom of God.” But it is not being drunken with wine that the apostle means: there is another way of being drunk besides this. Drunkenness leads to so many evils, that there is not an evil practised but what a man is liable to commit when drunk. Now I say if a man is eaten up with the cares of the world, and intoxicated with covetousness, the very vitals of religion are eaten. Not but that he may be a good man at the bottom, and he may have the root of the matter in him; but let a man be eaten up with the things of the world, and I will venture to say he has no relish for the things of God: they are nauseous to him. Ah, my friends! if you belong to God, and you get into any of these things, God will not leave you then; but wonder not if

you should go into Jonah's hell. God has plunged many a poor child of His into such circumstances, as to go down to the depths and to have the bars of the earth wrapped about him; but God will save him. Yes; He will save him. I once knew a man that was one of the most grasping, covetous men, as a godly man, that ever was. And the man went on so till pretty nearly the end of his race. But God stopped him, and He made him so sick of it, that for some time before his death he would not suffer any one to mention anything about money to him. "I have had enough of it. I don't want to hear anything about it."

Ah, my friends! there are some of us who know what it is to have these buyers and sellers turned out of the temple of our hearts and to have the heart raised above them. "Let us who are of the day be sober." Well, I hope there are some of us who are of the day. Blessed be God the sun has risen on us; the light has shined in our hearts. We may walk in darkness, but we are not children of darkness, but of the day. Well, then, "let us be sober;" let us be sober minded; let us walk as becomes those who make a profession of faith in Christ, "and put on the breastplate of faith and love." A blessed breastplate it is, faith and love—twin graces I call them. Wherever there is love there is faith, wherever there is faith there is love. I take them as twins, and neither of them is barren. Now I believe when faith of the operation of the Spirit of God, and the love of God, which is a fruit of the blessed Spirit, are shed abroad in the heart, I believe when this is the case, the child of God can do anything. What is there that the child of God cannot do when love is in operation? He can walk through the land like a monarch when he has got on the breastplate of faith and love. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." When faith is in the heart and love is in exercise, what sweet obedience we render to God, having for an helmet the "hope of salvation." You may understand the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as the helmet of Salvation if you have Him as the hope of salvation. He is the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation."

But I mean yet to abide by my intention, and that is not to preach too long. I am to myself the greatest mystery that ever existed. I am sometimes like a poor weary creature, the body languid and worn, and at other times when well in body I am like a stupid ass—no life, no energy, no power. No power for prayer, no power for preaching, no power for reading, and yet it is a fact that when I come to stand in the pulpit, I often find and feel the presence of my God with me, and I know that His presence cheers—I know that it is all-sufficient for a man. Well then, first let me notice the situation in which man is by nature.



You know it is rather degrading to persons who are elevated in life, and shining in society for others in a different station to meet them and say, "Well, I remember you when you were a little boy playing about with the dirty boys in the street." Well, I would not do such a thing as that, but I will take on me, by the grace of God, to show the loathsome state of man by nature, and also that by nature we are children of wrath, even as others, and unless I debase the creature and lay the sinner down, how shall I exalt the redeeming love of Christ? As soon as ever our parents fell by transgression, that moment we were brought under God's curse and exposed to His wrath: and that is what the apostle means, and he has made a very clear distinction. that we are by nature children of wrath, even as others. We are brought feelingly and experimentally to know that we deserve the wrath of God, that we are no better than others who are left to endure that wrath. And yet in a state of nature and under the workings of actual conviction, and under the first teaching too of God the Spirit, the poor sinner will try to make up matters and to make composition with the Almighty. Yes; he will make fair promises and vow that he will perform this, that, and the other, but never one does he perform. When finding that he cannot accomplish this, like a sinking man that cannot pay his full debts, he wants to compromise with his creditors, and he offers to make up matters with Christ. He will do so and so, if Christ will make up the residue. But the deeper and deeper the Spirit of God leads him, he sees that he is exposed to the dreadful wrath of God, and there is nothing before him but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries. I tell you, my friends, when you get there it will burn up some of your righteous doings. There is the dreadful majesty of the law, and then perhaps the poor soul sees the greatest sin that he has committed was in trying to be a co-worker with Christ. And he now sees that what the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law. You ask that poor sinner what he deserves and what he expects. He will tell you, "Deserve, indeed? I deserve nothing but hell." He can full well enter into what David says: "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" But, oh, there is a blessed turn. "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared, and plenteous redemption for them that hope in His mercy. Therefore let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy and plenteous redemption." Ah, what a turn there is in the poor sinner's heart. This poor sinner is equally deserving of wrath as those who are left under it. And he acknowledges that if God were strict to mark iniquity, that He must cut him off and banish him from His presence. But this text that I have read to you, that "God has not

appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him,"—let but such a text as this drop into the poor sinner's heart who fears the fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries; let this but drop into his heart, that God has not appointed him to wrath, and he is melted down in contrition of soul before God and with godly sorrow for sin.

We read in the scriptures of truth of vessels of wrath as well as vessels of mercy; but some people say, you had better let that alone, better not touch on that because it distresses the children of God. I tell you whatever leads to self-examination and secret prayer and to searching the Word of God is good: and, indeed, if such things are not to be preached, why are they in the Book of God?

In the ix. of Romans we read of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" and "vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory." Now what made this difference? The sovereignty of God's grace. My dear friends, now if you read in the second chapter of the first epistle of Peter you have a text equally striking: "Unto you therefore which believe," says the apostle, "He is precious; but not unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." A stone of stumbling. Who are they that stumble at the word, but they that walk in darkness, as I told you just now. But mark the sovereignty of God—whereunto they were appointed—they were appointed. Were then those vessels of wrath even fitted for destruction as the vessels of mercy are fitted for glory? Well then, we may well say at the close of this service, "What shall we say to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us?" If such is the fact that there are vessels of wrath, what can we say to it? As we read again, that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. When a man is left of God he will go on in sin. There is no restraining power; he remains under the curse of God, and dying in sin he proves that he is a vessel of wrath. "But God has not appointed us to wrath."

Let me just mention this as an evidence to find life in the soul. Has God quickened you? Are you a child of light and of the day? Has sin ever been a burden to you? Have you ever known what it is in the presence of a heart-searching God to come with the language of the Psalmist and say, "Search me, O God, try me, and know my thoughts, root out every evil way from me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Now I should take upon me to say that if in sincerity of heart you have ever come before God with

that prayer, you are not a child of darkness, but a child of the light and of the day.

Now may the blessed Lord the Spirit lead you to Him with the prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Amen.

### ZION IN AFFLICTION.

Ware Road, Hertford, Feb. 8th.

My Dear Sir,—

The enclosed is a copy of a letter received from a daughter of the late Mr. Harrow, to whom many of Mr. Bourne's letters are addressed. I hope you may think it worthy of a corner in your magazine. 'Our little Church,' of which she speaks is under the pastorate of Mr. W. B——, who succeeded the late Mr. G——. The mournfulness is occasioned by the many deaths we have had lately amongst us. Within the last eighteen months, the whole of which time my beloved mother has been upon a bed of suffering, nine have been taken away, and since the death of our dearly beloved minister, no less than twenty-five of his members have, we hope, joined him. Out of a small church this number is great, and we find few to take the place of the old tried ones. My mother's case is an encouragement to many. She has been, and is still enabled to testify in her old age (86), and in the midst of pain, of the Lord's faithfulness to the word upon which He has caused her to hope. Left a widow 36 years ago, with nine children (several afflicted) He has enabled her to carry on a little business, and His hand has been mercifully seen in ruling and over-ruling for her, and is to this day; and she is enabled to acknowledge Him in all her ways, and is now desiring to wait, but often longing for the Lord to come and take her to Himself.

I visited Eastbourne some years ago, when it was my privilege to become acquainted with dear Hunnisett, Lee and his wife, and Gausden, a poor old man I met on the road, and whose memory will always be pleasant to me. I heard of the death of the three former, but did not of his—though doubtless he has been gathered home before this.\*

I remain,

Yours (I hope) in Christian bonds,  
FANNY DRUMMOND.

Mr. Baxter.

January 19th, 1882.

My Dear F.—

Thank you very much for your kind letter. I am always glad to hear about the friends at H—— when I am absent. I was so sorry to hear about the death of dear Miss S—— though I was afraid from all that I heard, she would not recover; I also felt very much the sad news of dear Mrs. M——'s decease. What a mournful time it

[\* Yes, he too has passed away; for as with the cause of truth to which our correspondent refers, we have also been called to experience in our time many severe losses by death. They constituted one of the chief links in our leaving our first pastorate; and during the fifteen years we have been at Eastbourne many of the worthy aged ones besides those mentioned have been removed. A brother minister also writes: "During the last fifteen months I have lost two first cousins, a son-in-law, my dear wife, a grandchild, three valuable and tried deacons, and as regards members of the church, the number is appalling. With death you will thus see I have been made painfully familiar; but blessed be God, Jesus lives," &c.—THE EDITOR.]

has been for our little church, but I sincerely hope and believe, 'tis a blessed exchange for them. The longest life, how soon it is passed! And how dreadful it would be, if we had not some real evidences of another world which lasts to all eternity, where no more sin, sorrow, or pain is ever known, but all love,—“for ever with the Lord,”—a little of which we have tasted in this world. And

“If such the sweetness of the stream,  
What must the fountain be?”

Whom to know is life eternal. I wish I knew more of Him, but as we travel through this world, would we part with the little we do know of Him? I know I would not. 'Tis the greatest pleasure of my life to go and tell the Lord all. And if you only knew the many times lately I have had to go to Him, to make the very crooked things straight, and the many rough places plain, and to feel and say, ‘O do manage it for me,’ and the wonderful way in which it has been in everything over-ruled for good, and better to me than all my fears, I feel sure you would join with me in saying, What a good God He has been to me! and “Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.” And the words: “Acknowledge *Me* in all thy ways, and I will direct thy paths,” and,

“Will for thee work,  
And in thee too,  
And guide thee right,  
And bring thee through.”

and “You are not of this world, for I have chosen you out of the world:” and “Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price,” and many such comforting words have come, that I am full at times. Forsaken I am not, though I feel it a solemn thing to die, and know not when, where, or how I may meet with death; yet I know it must come sometime even with me, and I am not always favoured with faith or assurance to trust. But I know what it is to have both, and do sincerely hope my religion may be real, and that I may never be deceived. I don't know what I should do, if such were ever the case with me, but I trust it will never be. To feel He is our Friend at the last, and that nothing can separate, what a mercy. O may we leave a living testimony, and a dying one too, behind, that “all is well.” My cry is, “Keep me as the apple of Thine eye; hide me under the shadow of Thy wings.” “Keep me from evil that it may not grieve Thee,” for I feel I am so full of hateful sin. I would live without, but I cannot. But, as Mr. Hart says:

“'Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames;  
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's;  
No goodness, no fitness, expects He from us:  
This I can well witness, for none could be worse.”

I feel I have all evil in my heart, which is soon stirred up too ; but a secret something keeps it back at times, and that sweetens all : you know the secret, don't you ?

Yours very affectionately  
R. H.

### ALONE WITH JESUS.

Alone with Jesus !

'Tis here I love to be.  
Here unbelief is banished ;  
The prisoner is set free.

Alone with Jesus !

My head upon His breast !  
He smiles in love upon me—  
My soul's at peace and rest.

Alone with Jesus !

I nestle to His side,  
And call Him God and Father—  
My Jesus crucified.

Alone with Jesus !

I bow before His throne ;  
He sees and hears my moaning,  
And marks each secret groan.

Alone with Jesus !

I feel my Saviour's near ;  
And all my sin and sorrow  
I pour into His ear.

Alone with Jesus !

He claims me for His own,—  
" Look up, My child, thy Father's  
here !  
" Thy Father and thy God !"

Brighton.

Alone with Jesus !

His mercy I entreat,  
To guide a doubting sinner home,  
And from temptation keep.

Alone with Jesus !

My heart is filled with love ;  
O may I praise His precious name  
Until we meet above.

Alone with Jesus !

May I thus often be.  
If Thou, dear Lord, wilt draw me  
there,  
I'll soon run after Thee.

Alone with Jesus !

I would but cannot stay.  
My Saviour sees 'tis best for me  
To hide His face away.

Alone with Jesus !

My own and precious King ;  
Saved by Thy blood and righteousness  
Thy praise for aye I'll sing.

May we all with Jesus

Meet around His throne—  
Praise Father, Son, and Spirit—  
The glorious Three-in-One.

M. BAX.

### JEW AND GENTILE ONE IN CHRIST.



FULLY, Mr. Editor, the nations of Europe are passing through a momentous period. Events connected with the ancient people of God crowd upon us to such an extent that no Christian can view them with indifference, but must recognize the Divine fulfilment of God's promises towards the scattered people of His choice. The harrowing scenes recorded of the fiercest cruelties committed by professed Christians on the inoffensive Jews in Russia and Poland have roused the hatred of the English nation to these deeds, and drawn forth the sympathy of all parties towards their persecuted fellow creatures. The fact that no less than 10,000 victims have been sacrificed to rapine, lust and fire, besides 900 families being completely ruined, calls for the

prayerful intercession of God's Church in England at a throne of Grace that the enemy may be put down, that the Gospel of peace and goodwill may flow into the hearts of our Jewish brethren, and that God would arise and avenge His own elect among them, who are "beloved for the fathers' sakes."

The return of fugitive Jewish children to Palestine for residence at Jaffa through the States of Austria, by means of the Jewish Alliance Emigration Council, is a striking evidence of the devotion of Israelites to the land of their forefathers and of their adoption. "The angel or messenger of the Lord" declared to the house of Jacob upwards of 3,000 years ago that "No league should be made with the inhabitants of the land," Judges, ii. i. The Jews, as representatives of Judaea, have conformed to this message down to the present time, yet wherever they have been located, thrift, education, and civilization have attended their families. We see that the blessing to their father Abraham was twofold: a natural one; they were to be as the "dust of the earth;" a spiritual one; their seed was to be as the "stars for multitude." It is as a stone fruit, the kernel is within the shell, the life-giving principle is within the outward casket; an Israel is within an Israel. The remnants of this nation, scattered over all the earth, still possess advantages which would belong to no other people in similar unhappy circumstances. Their natural ingenuity and industry, the strength of their religious zeal, the literary treasures of their holy writings, secured to them everywhere admittance and success, and preserved their natural character. They found proselytes and old believers in all countries of the Roman Empire, and in the east as far as the valley of the Irrawaddy in British Burmah, where some thousand families have settled since the Babylonish captivity and remain faithful to the Mosaic ritual at the present day, neither have they disobeyed the angelic message, "Not to make a league with the surrounding inhabitants of the land." One of the earliest fruits of their union into Patriarchates in the east was the collection of the traditionary expositions of the Old Testament, A.D. 200. This immemorial purity of a seed whom the Lord has blessed with faithful Abraham, forms an irresistible advocate to our Indian Missionary subjects in Burmah, of the truth and Divine protection of God towards His ancient people, and thus they become pioneers, in the hands of the Lord the Spirit, to open the way to Him Who is David's Son and David's Lord, Jehovah Tsidkenu.

But alas! in criticizing the blindness that has "happened in part" unto Israel, let the Gentile Church learn a solemn lesson in the experience of God's righteous retribution towards all who profess His truth, love His Word, and make mention of His name. Fallen man ever tends in his nature to earth, and shows himself "earthly, sensual,

devilish," and the carnal indulgences so explicitly forbidden by the Mosaic ritual are committed alike by professors and profane in this land of ours, falsely called Christendom.

When we seek a spiritual interpretation of the league which the sons and daughters of Zion are apt to make with the bosom enemies within, we shall find that idolatry in the form of inordinate affection is the most common foe to the peace of a Christian in his daily walk with God. When this Canaanitish dweller in our land is suffered to exercise its baneful influence, the throne of the heart is in a measure shared with the Best Beloved, the King in Zion, and the rise of this spirit of idolatry within is known by its drawing the disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ into forbidden paths, and away from the Giver of the creature to the gift, and thus the heart is closed to and forgetful of the source from whence the gift came. The Apostle levelled this rebuke in writing to the Church at Rome, Chap. i. ver. 25. Whenever a partaker of Divine grace is found to be guilty of such evil work, the league once made with this enemy to God's honour and Christ's supremacy is followed by bondage of spirit, barrenness of heart, coldness to the Best Beloved, and a distrust of God's Providence. Look for instance at the opposite conditions of belief and unbelief, of a natural tie bound down by the Almighty command of obedience and submission, first in Abraham, who, in the sacrificial offering of him whose seed was to inherit the promised blessing, yet accounted that God in Christ was able to raise up this seed even from the dead, and then in contrast view the overwhelming agony of soul which the sweet Psalmist of Israel betrayed at the death of his unnatural son, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son—my son!"

A league made in the heart of a believer with another inhabitant of this land of Canaan, viz., love of money, is sure to be followed by a suspicion of God's Providence, and a distrust of His watchfulness in the daily steps of our life. And these fruits are often attended with an independent spirit, as we learn in the fall of good Hezekiah, who was so carried away by this unholy alliance, that he was glad to show to a set of heathen messengers all the precious things and treasures in his house and in all his dominions; but uttered not a syllable of the bounteous mercy of the God in Whose Almighty hands his breath and his riches were, and in Whom he lived and moved, and had his Royal being. Not so with his godly progenitor, who publicly declared that both riches and honour came from his God, for all the store that he possessed flowed from this Divine hand and was all His own, and of that had he been privileged to give back to the Author of his mercies. What a reversible picture of human pride and humility of spirit does the

Holy Ghost set before His Church in the conduct of these two righteous men (see 1st Chronicles xxix. 12. 16., Isaiah xxxix.)

The fear of man is another meretricious dweller in Canaan, and is often found to act the part of the "strange woman," solemnly warned of in Proverbs 5th chap., 7th ver. When an allegiance is formed with this enemy, the poor bondaged spirit has abundant argument at hand for his cowardice and untruthfulness, eating his own lies, wiping his foul mouth, and saying, "I have done no wickedness." (Proverbs 30th chap., 20th ver.) God's mirror sets us a sad picture for reflection in the disciple who cowered under the maid's assertion: "Surely thou art one of the despised Nazarenes, thy speech betrays thee." We all know alas! alas! what followed; until the eyes of ineffable love and pity met the criminal and broke his hard heart (as William Huntington puts it) on the feather bed of infinite mercy and sovereign grace, and overcame him (Song of Solomon 6th chap., 5th ver.)

What a contrast does the valiant Apostle to the Gentile church furnish us: "What, mean ye to weep and to break mine heart (with your carnal persuasions)? I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Thus we gather from the whole tenor of Scripture that the precepts set forth in the Mosaic ordinances and commands were embodied and fulfilled in every jot by the Great High Priest of our profession—Emmanuel. He set the Lord Jehovah ever before Him, and did always those things which pleased Him. The law of perfect love to God the Father and to fallen man was exhibited in His life and in His death. He had none on earth that He desired before Him. And in this spotless pattern of "a well spent life," on behalf of His bride, the Church, He preaches moment by moment to her that she is to have none other God before Him, and that the throne of her heart is never to suffer a rival there; the bridal bed must be that of a chaste virgin, Canticles 1st chap., 16th ver. He has won her affections here, and bound her by indissoluble ties of a covenant signed in blood and sealed with love, and when the sacred moment draws near that mortality is to be swallowed up of life, she will have no other song of triumph, and no other object to glory in but in her Beloved, whilst—

"Kind angels are bringing her fast as she list,  
And up she goes singing Hosanna to Christ."

Brighton,  
February, 1882.

GEO. CORFE, M.D.

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The strongest man in the family of God is the man who feels he cannot go one step but as the Lord upholds him.—*Krause.*



## A REMARKABLE CONVERSION.

(A REPRINT.)



MAN of God went to live in a village where none cared for anything beyond this present life. He was a stranger indeed among them. Early and late he laboured in the fields ; but the Lord of the whole earth had ordained a blessing for this dark hamlet when He sent His servant there, and a river of the water of life was to flow through this solitary man, unseen by all save the One that keepeth Israel, and neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Yet the servant of God was not required for the ministry to forsake his calling, but to follow the Lord in it. He lived in a poor thatched cottage on the outskirts of the village ; and, when his work was done, seated by the low casement of his room in summer time, he rested his weary heart in close communion with his heavenly Friend. Dispirited by intercourse with the mocker and profane, he refreshed himself with new contemplations of the covenant of grace, or pondered over the promises which he was every day proving for himself were priceless treasures for constant use.

As he communed with God alone, and poured forth his soul in prayer, a woman of ill character passed by the cottage door ; the sound of the stranger's voice arrested her steps, and she lingered by the casement. She listened. Never before had she heard a soul speaking to the God of its life in such glad thanksgiving for redemption through the blood of the Crucified, or imagined such holy boldness in approaching the Holy One, by her unsought : it seemed a new language to her ears. The prayer ceased. The listener, astonished and perplexed, went on her way, and the solitary man, the charge of angels, lay down to sleep. None but God saw that tiny rill of life that followed a sinner's steps, whispering, "Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come ; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Another day passed. The woman again took up her station in the twilight to listen, and the freedom from condemnation in which the stranger rejoiced, seemed to bind her in chains of misery unfelt before. Her occupation was a degrading one. She possessed a voice of remarkable power and sweetness, her husband frequented the taverns in the neighbourhood, and she accompanied him, for he procured from the landlord or his guests the beer or spirits he thirsted for, with the price of his wife's company and songs.

Day by day the singer marked the man of God, to see if his life contradicted his desires after holiness ; for his prayers set a sign

upon him, and she watched for his halting week after week, and watched in vain. While in many a conflict, and in humble brokenness of spirit, this lonely man seemed to himself a cumberer of the ground, as far as bringing any honour to God was concerned, yet through him flowed the living stream which should turn "the wilderness into a standing water, and the dry ground into water-springs."

The servant of the Lord slept, unconscious of his ministry, little dreaming that the words he had spoken to the Lord in the silence of that summer evening were disturbing the midnight orgies of sinners to whom he had never spoken, and who had never heard of his existence. The woman's heart was heavy, and she could not sing. She turned away in bitterness of spirit from the scene in which she had hitherto been content to dwell. The anger of her husband raged against her; his gains were gone, and all the means of procuring his evening's wild revelry were over. His persecution added to the poor creature's distress, but it was as nothing in comparison to the weight of misery on her heart. Heavier and heavier pressed the burden of her sins; the way of escape she knew not; despair took possession of her soul. Satan now thought that the prey was his own; he whispered that "in death there was no remembrance;" but the enemy added not, "and after death the judgment."

The heart-stricken woman saw only one way, and she determined to rid herself of a life become intolerable to her. One morning when she thought herself secure from interruption, she went to a neighbouring stable, and tying a noose into a rope, fastened it securely to a beam in the roof, and prepared to end an existence too miserable to be borne. But as her foot was on the edge of the loft from which she premeditated casting herself down, the praise and thanksgiving of the stranger for redemption through the precious blood of Jesus came flowing into her mind and arrested her. She knelt; she repeated again and again the words of the prayer which had taken her captive; such sweetness came with the words, "Redeemed! pardoned! through the precious blood of God's dear Son!" As if the flood-gates of her tears had opened the way for prayer, it poured forth in a wondrous tide. The sinner wept at the feet of Jesus! The prey was taken from the mighty. Hour after hour went by; she heeded it not; and daylight had faded into evening before her new-born joy allowed her to perceive that the day was spent, and she was saved!

When the servant of the Lord returned to his solitary room, it was to find a rejoicing child of the faith awaiting him, the fruit of those days that seemed of no account, save that he walked in fellowship with Jesus. He had lived near the fountain; the stream


that flowed in refreshment through his own soul, had given life to the weary one without.

Year after year, from many a prayer-meeting, arose the voice of the rescued minstrel, clear and strong, in strains of praise to the Lord and Giver of life. And not alone; her husband was by her side, the first to give heed to her words, and to believe her witness to the Lord's long-suffering mercy to himself.

Heaven alone can declare the harvest of that lonely man who walked with God.

From *The Remembrancer*, May, 1881.

### HOLIDAYS *versus* HOLY DAYS.

OW different are Divine from human appointments and institutions! Whatever is of God conduces to the benefit of the creature—especially the *redeemed* creature; while whatever is of man, has usually Satan at its root, and mischief and misery at its end. Holidays are busy times in the devil's workshop; while holy days are for the spiritual service of the God of Salvation. As one who has had a share in the arduous occupations of life, and toiled for years at a sedentary business, I know the value of occasional relaxation. But it has not been my lot to share in much of it. I have laboured 12, 14, and 16 hours in a day, and had respite (excepting the Sabbath), only at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas. Nor have any of those times done me the same amount of good as the rest obtained on the Lord's Day.

It is not however my desire to speak against the brief holidays which are now granted weekly to thousands of young persons in places of heavy business. If they have wisdom to utilize these opportunities for physical health and moral improvement, so far so good. But I often fear that public houses and cigar divans and other equally objectionable places are the greatest gainers by the half-holiday movement. A few may seek intellectual advancement—the greater part will be for trifling, expensive, and exhaustive amusement. For thus by the devil, as Quarles puts it, is this poor world turned and whipped round about.

But holidays, as the appointments of a corrupted Christianity and apostate church—that of Rome—bring an invariable curse in their train. The multitude of them in papal countries, with their attendant idleness and poverty and crime is well known. And to the reflective and spiritually-minded christian the times, as observed in England, are times of increased dissipation and vice with the ungodly, and times of temptation and often of persecution to himself. For it may be that he is in his family circle and the round of his acquaintances "a sparrow alone." Grace has arrested him, and left them. The Holy Spirit has quickened *him* from death in

trespasses and sins, while *they* still remain in the embraces of the wicked one. As the consequence, they are all for the boisterous mirth and jovial pleasures with which, let us say, Christmas for example is associated. The Pantomime, the dance, and carnal songs are all the rage. But he dares not to engage in any of these things, "because of the fear of God." His corrupt nature may strive to obtain a measure of fleshly gratification in some way or other; and the light of the Lord's countenance may be withholden, so that it is a sorry period with his soul; while he is exhibited as a mark for the wit, scorn, and pity of those who are unable to discern him in his character of "a new creature in Christ Jesus." 1 Cor. ii. 15. And thus it often happens at these so-called festive seasons that "the days of famine" are the portion of the believer, and he starves in the midst of the worldling's plenty, feeling neither *in* the world, nor yet wholly *separate from* it.

Often have I wished the day called Christmas, under the above circumstances, namely, in the midst of worldly associations, as Job wished the day of his birth: "Let it not be joined to the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months." Chapter iii. 6. At Easter or Whitsuntide, if the fields were sought by train at some distance from London, the company of the throngs of the merry-mad pleasure-seekers had to be endured, with their song-singing, inebriation, &c.; but at Christmas there was no escape, as immemorial custom bound one to the social and health-drinking dinner-table with many of its after transactions. What a relief when the time had passed—excepting the sting on the conscience, for the measure of conformity to the world which had been indulged in. Truly "to be carnally minded is death."

While therefore rest from exhaustive toil is undoubtedly much to be desired at other times than the Lord's Day, when the child of God may inhale the fresh and invigorating air of sea and fields, and endorse the grand truth: "All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord, and Thy saints shall bless Thee," it is well when this can be done without any connection with Rome's established holidays. For there is no repose in earth's pleasures; her children are wearied in the greatness of their way, and find vexatious toil as the end of all their pursuits. And why so? It is because the Lord's blessing does not rest on the appointments of superstition and carnality: and only where that blessing *does* rest, is there no sorrow added by Him therewith. Doubtless the great arch-fiend chuckles with delight at what he has accomplished in the name of Religion. The carnival at Naples derives all its eclat from the priestly prescribed Fast; and Rome has toiled for the flesh of men, more hardly than the Lord's servants for their souls.

Z. A. O.

## PERSONAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## A PITHY GREETING.

Rose Bank, Reigate, Jan. 21, 1882.

My dear Mr. Baxter and brother beloved in the Lord,—

**G**RACE, mercy, peace, and love be multiplied unto thee and thine from the Fountain-head of all covenant blessing.

“*Grace*,” which will keep thee in spite of all felt unworthiness;

“*Mercy*,” to meet thee in every necessity;

“*Peace*,” in every time of perplexity and conflict or toil; and

“*Love*,” to warm and cheer when all around, within or without, is cold, dreary, and desolate. Amen and Amen.

May you richly enjoy the promise to be conferred on all the promised seed, “In blessing I will bless thee,” is the prayer and heartfelt desire of your brother and companion in tribulation,

CALVIN MARTIN.

## CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

14, Sotherton Road, Watford, Feb. 12, 1882.

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus,—

May the blessing of God rest upon you both in your editorial and ministerial labours, and under all your afflictions and temptations may you realize the sustaining power of Divine love.

I have been prevented from fulfilling my engagements on account of the increase of my bodily infirmity, and have thought I must resign all. I hardly feel justified for the present in publishing them, as I am still in a very unfit state for long journeys. But I have certainly felt some improvement in my health the last two days, and I think it arises from the blessing of God on a very simple remedy, prescribed by my doctor for trial, as he would not take the responsibility of administering anything beyond unless I went to a surgeon of one of the London hospitals, and underwent an examination. I have already submitted to this twice, and the pain and exhaustion produced was so great that I must decline, unless I feel that it is absolutely necessary.

If my complaint is incurable, I want to leave myself in the Lord's hands and seek of Him patience to bear it, and grace to sanctify it to me for His glory and my profit.

But I sometimes think that after all it may only be for a season, and Divine power may again raise me up to comparative health and strength, and the goodness of the Lord open to me a door where I may be yet employed in feeding the poor of the flock. I have now been afflicted about two years, yet have travelled much and had much strength given me for the work, and I believe the nature

my complaint has very much relieved the pressure on the  
to which I was rather liable. Is there not reason for grati-  
even in our deepest afflictions? We may always see therein  
token of Divine favour.

I enclose you a little scrap which I composed some time ago  
suffering racking pain of body. I do not wish to burden  
out perhaps some of the Lord's afflicted ones may read it with  
pathetic spirit, and thus the unity of the mystic members of  
be made manifest. In the last, as printed in the *Advocate*,  
were two errors: "porter" should have been "master,"\* and  
"Skeeles" should have been "G. Skeeles."

My dear wife is almost wholly confined to the house with heart  
saint. She dare not go out except when the sun shines, and  
only a little way, and returns quite exhausted. She unites  
me in Christian love to yourself and Mrs. Baxter, hoping that  
we both well.

The words of the Psalmist were very sweet to me this morning  
(Psalm lxxxiv. 2): "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the  
of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living  
' How sweet to feel a union and to long for communion  
those who are interested in redeeming love. This is surely a  
of Divine sonship, for the beloved John says, "We know  
we have passed from death unto life, because we love the  
Father."

Believe me, my dear Brother,

Yours very sincerely in Christ Jesus,

GEO. SKEELES.

On receiving the above, another Letter has come to hand from our afflicted  
brother, recording the departure from this world of his dear partner, Mrs. MARY  
SKEELES, whose dying testimony, as we learn from the memorial card,  
' I feel it a very solemn thing to come actually into the presence of death.  
I have been convinced of my state as a sinner by the Spirit of God. I hope  
I have fled to Jesus Christ, as the only refuge of the lost and ruined. I have  
been trusted. And I hope all will be well with me at the last.']  
I append Mr. G. Skeeles' letter.

Watford, March 11th, 1882.

My dear Brother in Christ Jesus,—I enclose this (a memorial  
card) which will inform you of a very severe loss that I have sus-  
tained. I have been expecting it for a long time. Every night  
when I retired to rest, I knew that I might find my dear partner  
by my side. When she went out for a walk I knew she might  
be found home dead. And every journey I took, the same thing  
continued continually on my mind.

In addition to the above, I have for two years at least been deeply  
troubled with a complaint in the bowels, which caused me the most

\* See page 55, line 10 from top.

distressing pain. I have preached with my soul full of life and immortality, and my poor body pierced as with arrows.

I had been compelled at length to give up all my engagements, and then followed the closing scene of my dear wife. After she was gone, I was compelled to take wholly to my bed, which I have occupied with but little change since. I could not follow her to the grave, but witnessed the funeral procession from an upper window. But I have been graciously supported, and I feel thankful she will never suffer more herself—and that she is not here to hear my groans and to witness my intense sufferings. I have received many marks of sympathy and kindness from my own Christian friends in London and in the country, as well as here. But the general interest manifested to me under my bereavement and my suffering has been of a most overwhelming nature. I have had a visit from a Minister of another denomination to-day, who before he left offered up such a solemn prayer, and his conversation was so deeply spiritual that it quite cheered me. I have known him many years and always thought him a good man, though we should not fully agree on doctrinal truths. It is pleasing that a stated ministry of 18 years in the town has, under the blessing of God, been attended with the good feeling of the religious denominations in this town (which is now very large) towards me. I am now under treatment by a very skilful medical man, and have some hope that, though the complaint is incurable, yet I may enjoy a little relief for my few remaining days. I can say, my dear brother, I have no wish of my own, as “whether I live or whether I die, I know I am the Lord’s.” I feel the comfortable support of those holy truths I have preached to others—and that to an extent which many of the Lord’s people cannot possibly know, who do not sit under a clear statement of truth. O, what a debtor to free and sovereign grace. From 16 years of age I have loved and walked in “the truth as it is in Jesus.” I cannot write much, so that I turn to you, and ask you kindly through the *Gospel Advocate* to let my friends know how sweetly I am lying in the arms of everlasting love, while under very painful trials.

I should very much like to hold a little personal communion with you. True I lie wide of your path and must not expect such a favour: but if any of the Lord’s dear servants have an hour to spare on journey, and could do it without much expense or inconvenience, I should be so glad to see them.

I hope that yourself and Mrs. Baxter are well. Please accept my warmest Christian love, and wishing you the enjoyment of every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.

I remain, yours truly in Him,

GEORGE SKEELES.

## A SPARROW ALONE.

January 22, 1882.

Dear Sir,—I feel it my duty, although a stranger to you personally,—but not a stranger to your writings, for I have, indeed, enjoyed your “New Year’s Address” to us poor, lost, undone sinners in and of ourselves,—to write to you, and I do sincerely hope that you may be both bodily and spiritually helped by the ever-blessed Spirit to maintain your pastoral and editorial work, for the sake of the dear Lord’s people. I feel it incumbent on me to tell you of the dear Lord’s goodness to my heart, after so fierce a hurricane and storm as I related to you when last I troubled you. Ah, and it was a storm, indeed! I have not forgotten it, nor the climax, for it was at that juncture that I felt it abate when, I think, I said, “I shall sink!” when the great I Am said, “I sink too!” Oh, sir, it was a climax; and in the street too. I had walked to Gower-street Chapel and nearly back, when the battle abated with those memorable words. I think, also, I must have spoken aloud sometimes, for I remember looking to see if there was anyone behind me, but I saw none. I think I gave utterance to the words, “It is hard! it is hard!” Ah, sir, it is fresh upon me now while I write; and then that piece of poetry, “I will help thee,” in last month’s *Advocate*,—I have read it again to-night. But oh, sir, it was almost more than I could well bear; it is so personal. I should like it printed in letters of gold, it is so beautiful. True, if the poor soul is enabled to reply, as I was privileged to do, and use it as my own; for it was but a very gentle—oh, so gentle—a chiding, that it did not hurt me. It was only momentary, yet it abated the roughness of the storm.

The good person at Nottingham who wrote that piece must have known something of a storm I should think, or I do not see how he could have penned the lines so minutely, and with such a nicety; but still he was not a servant nor a poor weak woman.\* It is true, sir, in every sense of the word, that I have not one creature in this world that I can communicate with: they seem either to shun me or are afraid of me. I know no reason, only they do not understand me, and so cannot believe me. What I felt keener than anything, is, not being able to relieve my poor distressed and distracted mind, all on account of not being able to leave the future alone. But, sir, the dear Lord knows I fain would gladly have done so if I had been able; but I was not. I had been out of a situation nearly three months; and going after place after place, as many as eight in one day, and every one a denial—I being too old; and I know that when I cannot work I

\* Our correspondent will perhaps be surprised to know it was a woman that wrote it.—THE EDITOR.



cannot live—the body must be fed ; but the dear Lord was so good throughout all, with His presence to comfort and to cheer me, when I was able to hear it, and He was pleased to give me quiet nights, which was a great mercy. He has given me a place to live in for a time ; how long I cannot say : but to all appearance I give the greatest satisfaction, as I have not had a cross word or a fault found yet. I have been here five weeks yesterday ; but I feel it is very temporary ; it was got for me almost without any trouble on my part. It is a business house. I never lived in one before ; but the place suits me much, if I have but my health and strength to do the work. It wants great management ; young people cannot do it. They are always changing their servants, or have been only keeping one ; but management is the chief thing, and I feel very tired at the end of the day. I do have my Sundays nearly alone, but I have scarce been out yet, for I am glad to take all the rest I can, for the poor body's sake. Ah, sir, I never thought of being too old to work in my younger days ; and the body was very little studied then. Now it is all my anxiety how I am to live ; but I believe the worst is past. Concerning that, the Lord alone knows what He has enabled me to pass through ; but I believe He will supply all my needs while in the wilderness.

From your humble servant,

A SPARROW ALONE.

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#### HELPS BY THE WAY.

March 2, 1882.

My dear Sir,—I think it is about eight years since I first heard you preach, and I have a sweet remembrance of it to this day: "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord," and I think I may truly say from that day to this there has not been a day that you have been absent from my thoughts. I hope you are well in health and have much of the Master's presence. The Lord make you a blessing to the people wherever you are called to preach. Very few know the real value of a Gospel minister. I have thought much of Elijah and Elisha—what wonderful love. "As thy soul liveth I will not leave thee," said Elisha, and the Lord granted him the "double portion." I have no doubt they were men of deep feeling and corresponding expression. I think I can enter a little into his feelings when he saw his master no more. It is said "he rent his clothes." Well he might. It was a token of sorrow with God's ancient people. Oh that the Lord would stir up His people to seek Him more earnestly, that they may not rest satisfied without this "double portion." I cannot rest satisfied in that which I have received. I want fresh tokens of His

ove to my soul. How very sweet have these words been to me :  
 'Blessed is the man that heareth Me ; watching daily at My gates,  
 waiting at the posts of My doors : for whoso findeth Me findeth  
 life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.' "Then shall we know if  
 we follow on to know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as  
 the morning, and He will come unto us as the early and the latter  
 rain." How nice is the dew when it descends upon our souls. The  
 Lord gave me a little of this the last Lord's-day under Mr. Fraser.  
 His text was from 2 Peter i. 16 : "For we have not followed cunningly  
 devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and  
 coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His  
 majesty." I hope to see you very soon. The Lord come with you  
 and prepare our hearts to receive it, and that all intruders may be  
 kept in the background.

What a nice frame of mind I was in the Tuesday morn-  
 ing I was at \*\*\*\*\*. I stood looking out of my friend's  
 window, and I had an unusual desire to see you pass by :  
 not as Zacchæus had, who climbed up into a sycamore tree, but out  
 of pure love to you as a man of God. It was but a few minutes  
 before I saw you pass by. I can scarce describe my feelings. I  
 blessed and praised the Lord that ever you came into these parts ;  
 that the Lord should so bless the word to my soul, who am not  
 worthy of the least of His mercy nor the notice of you, His servant.  
 I could not help shedding tears that such love was shown to me.  
 Why did He not pass by me and take another far more fit for the  
 kingdom of heaven than I am ? Several of my companions have  
 been cut down in early life, having no hope, and without God in  
 the world, and why have I found favour that the Lord should take  
 notice of me, seeing I was a stranger ? We thank you for what  
 you have sent. I have read them through and through. I see  
 you have several calls on your way here. May the Lord stand by  
 and support and comfort you and give you journeying mercies.  
 Wherever the Lord sends His messengers there is sure to be a  
 Rebecca. A true Gospel minister has the Lord at his right hand.  
 He puts words in his mouth, strengthens him to deliver His mes-  
 sage. And what a mercy it is to be made willing in the day of  
 His power to leave all that we have, and to say with Rebecca, "I  
 will go." How often is it with a minister they stand by the well  
 of water, faith not being in exercise ? They have nothing to draw  
 with, and the well is deep. They are sorely tried. "Faith is the  
 gift of God," and this every believing soul knows. I felt very much  
 for a young man that I once heard preach. He could scarcely come  
 at anything, and he had no learning to fall back upon. I met with a  
 young man a long time ago. He told me what a sweet lift he got  
 under your preaching. He had been on the borders of despair—

thought there was no hope for him. The Lord sent the word to his heart, and raised him from his despairing state. He said, with tears in his eyes, "If Mr. Baxter is right, it will one day be well with me." It is very encouraging to a minister to hear that his ministry is blessed to the people, and when the Lord has a word for us how it tells upon our hearts. We are like Rebecca returning from the well, looking upon the jewels, the precious promises of the Gospel.

With love, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

A GLEANER.

### UNDER PAIN AND SICKNESS.

My mortal part, companion of my soul  
 These threescore years,  
 How oft have I been clogged and checked by thee!  
 Fain would my spirit fly from thy control;  
 To part with tears,  
 And bathe herself in heaven's immensity.  
 Yet, still, to part with thee, through whom I act,  
 And render clear  
 To sensual eye, what otherwise would be  
 Dark and obscure—although an inward fact—  
 Fills me with fear,  
 And makes me shrink from vast futurity.  
 But why these fears? Thou art by Christ redeemed  
 With precious blood,  
 And shalt be raised by Him both sound and whole;  
 To share with those by Him beloved, esteemed,  
 Their heavenly food,  
 In sweet re-union with my purged soul.  
 Submit, then, O inferior part,  
 To the decree  
 Which says, "To dust thou must return."  
 'That spirit, whose sad cumbrance now thou art,  
 'Give liberty!  
 'Lie down and take thy sleep till morning dawn.'

Watford.

G. SKEELES.

Strive to make prayer, and reading, and holy company, your delight; and when delight cometh in, ye shall, by little and little, smell the sweetness of Christ, till at length your soul be filled with Christ's sweetness.  
 —*Rutherford.*

## Letters by the Household of Faith.

LETTER BY RUTH BRYAN.

Dear Beloved,

I think much of you in the conflicting opinions which surround you; but it will all, in the Lord's hand, tend to strengthen, establish, and settle you in Him, above the fogs and mists of creature 'yea and nay.' I am hoping it will be with you according to the dear word I am so enjoying: "It was but a little that I passed by them, but I found Him Whom my soul loveth." May you pass by them all, and listen to what your Lord will say, and seek to follow that; for "in keeping His commandments there is great reward."

Verily, it is no misfortune to be alone with Jesus. When creatures are all gone it is a luxury; and when self is all gone it is the climax of bliss! Then, indeed, is absorption in Him. And there are such seasons even here below; and the more we live by faith, the more we shall realise it. I can say, as an aged minister did whom I once knew, "I do not mind who says it is only judgment-faith, while I feel the oil running down my back." Ah, that is it: it is the home witness. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." If others cannot read the new name in his white stone, he has greater witness than that of man: and as kept believing, or in the exercise of faith, the witness is clear. "For he that liveth and believeth in Me"—not *has* believed, but present tense, *believeth*; daily, hourly—"shall never die." Christ is our life; and thus by faith we see it, and "bear witness that this is indeed that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;" and that amidst all our changeabilities, our life is hid with Him in God, where our sin and death cannot reach it, or touch it. These things work in the flesh; but as we live by faith, we do not judge after the flesh; knowing this, that "our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed"—counted a dead thing—and we live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." We do not reckon by that rule. Its better doings and its worse doings are all nothing; they are all nailed to the cross, that we may glory only in the Lord, and in union-privilege reckon by the doings of our Surety, and overcome by His blood, and triumph in His righteousness, and find that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

This blessed way of wisdom is "hid from the eyes of all living." It is the dead—those who are crucified with Christ—that find it; for "Destruction and death say, We have heard of the fame thereof

with our ears." Through the death of self, we come to enjoy Christ, the hidden wisdom, as the resurrection and the life, and the death of self can only come by His cross.\* "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. "Dear, precious Lord, "in life we are lovely and pleasant to each other, and in death we are not divided." We died with Thee, and shall live in Thy love and presence for ever and ever,—the second Adam and Eve in the paradise of God. Who can help rejoicing in "Jesus only?"

Ever yours,

RUTH.

\* This may be taken as a beautiful adaptation, but it must not be understood as an interpretation of Job xxviii. 22, which was the first portion dear Ruth heard *us* preach from. EDITOR.

### LETTER BY A TRIED PILGRIM.

9, Birchin Lane, Nov. 17, 1856.

My dear Brother in the Lord,—



HAVE a little time to spare, and desire to employ it in a short communication, looking up for the blessing of the Lord to rest upon me and you in all these means of intercourse. I thank you for the very kind letter last received, and heartily coincide in all its contents. In the matter of S \* \* \* I get as far as you do, and there I stop. I desire to hear the voice of the Son of God, saying with mighty power and effect, "Follow Me." I deplore my wretched inability to enter into the precious blessings of knowing Him, of seeing His beauty, experiencing His rich grace and heart-breaking and heart-melting dying love and rising and reigning glory. Of all the poor worms of earth in whom is no breath, who cleave to the dust, who abide in desolate places like dead men, I seem one of the most worthless, and hence I often feel straitened in letter writing, standing in doubt of myself, and compelled to give such a dismal account of matters from time to time. But I feel it is a blessing that I have one who knows much of the path of life, and who is willing to bear with me and ready to counsel, instruct and encourage my feeble spirit. You are, through covenant mercy, raised up to enjoy that saving knowledge of, and vital experience and communion with, the Holy One of Israel, which I have so long hoped for, asked for, and waited for; but, alas, seem still so far from attaining, being tossed about and bewildered with natural faith, natural hopes, natural understanding, and fleshly and habitual profession, &c., &c. Out of this labyrinth I am utterly unable to come forth, until the gracious Redeemer says to me, "Go forth, show thyself; I have redeemed thee, thou art Mine." But at present,

"I tire and faint and mope and mourn.  
And *seem* but barren still,"

And all my efforts are insufficient to answer the question,

"Do I love the Lord or no? Am I His or am I not?"

Thus you see I am a poor creeping thing yet; cannot "lay hold on Christ by His death" with feeling, with love, and assurance by the Holy Ghost; but after my unhappy cogitations and inward searchings I can only come to this one point, "I wait the visits of His grace," and

"New life from Him I must receive, before for sin I rightly grieve."

My hope is thus simply upon what His almighty arm can do, what He hath promised to do, in the sovereignty of His grace and redeeming love; but I find it hard work to really confide in this while "my house is not so with God," my evidences *all* suspicious, my thoughts empty and unfeeling, and several terrific rocks of false profession, in my own past observation, portending nothing but gloom, and fear, and tremendous ruin; and the *justice* of the Divine *Sovereignty* acknowledged in it all. In these things I am like a ship at sea, and cannot find the "anchor sure and steadfast," but wonder where it will all end, and feel myself hopeless, guilty and wretched, unless the *Arm of the Lord* is revealed for my deliverance and rescue. But the general knowledge, by reading and hearing, concerning the hopes, fears and comforts of the Gospel, which I have obtained, seems to mock me as theory without life and reality in my own case: and thus from what I pass through, I feel now "as clay in the hands of the potter." And while detailing these doleful things I desire never to lose sight of the Hope of Israel, but to speak to His honour, and make mention of His wondrous works, *as far as I have been led* to experience them in the outward tokens of His goodness, wisdom and power, and in the ordering of my steps hitherto; in saving me from so many snares, dangers and evils, and in giving me the least hope in His mercy. My complaints only respect my wretched self. I had need come as the poor Gentile woman, low in the dust, seeking, as it were, a crumb from the Gospel table, as an earnest of the *fulness* of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. The Lord grant it. Amen.

I must go on seeking the Lord and His strength O may a set time of favour soon come:

"A light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb."

I am like a dumb man, and cannot write what I would to the praise and honour and glory of the Friend of Sinners; but I desire to love Him, to become *feelingly* His child, to be cut off from every sin and made meet for His kingdom. The Lord keep me, and perfect that which concerneth me for, His great name's sake.

Remember me at the throne, dear brother, and the Lord enrich

you with all covenant blessings, and unite us now henceforth and for ever in *Himself*.

Very hastily I have scribbled this. Excuse it. We are all in health still, thank God, and I hope you are so favoured.

I desire ever to remain,

Your sincerely affectionate and hopeful  
friend in Christ,

THOS. A. WILLIAMS.

## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

“Many cry in tribulation, and are not heard. Paul cried that the thorn in the flesh might be taken away from him, and he was not heard for it to be taken away; and it was said to him, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore was he not heard;....to the end that man may understand that God is a Physician, and that tribulation is a remedy for salvation, not a punishment for condemnation. While under treatment thou art cauterized, cut, criest out, : the physician heeds not for thy wish, but he heeds for thy health.”

“To his profit, Paul was not heard; to condemnation the devil was heard. He asked to tempt Job and it was granted. The devils asked to go into the swine, and they were heard. Devils are heard, an apostle is not heard: but they are heard unto condemnation, the apostle is not heard (*but*) unto salvation.” *Augustine* on the Psalms (pages 152 and 153) vol. 1.

“Adam on the dunghill” (that is Job) “was more guarded than Adam in Paradise. For Adam in Paradise consented to the woman, that he should be sent out of Paradise: Adam on the dunghill rejected the woman, that he should be admitted into paradise. What then does that Adam on the dunghill, travelling with immortality *within, without* outspread with worms, what says he to the woman? Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” *Augustine* on the Psalms.


## SHORT OBITUARY NOTICES.

Died in the Lord, February 20th, Mr. James Francis Crompton, of Peckham, London, aged 59 years.—February 26th, Mrs. Annie Elizabeth Meadows, the beloved wife of Mr. George Meadows (Town Clerk of Hastings), aged 57 years.—March 4th, Mrs. Mary Ann Skeeles, the beloved wife of Mr. George Skeeles, Minister of the Gospel, Watford.

## ESSAYS ON HART'S HYMNS.—LIV.

## HYMN 50.

"*Charity never faileth.*"—1 Cor. xiii. 8.

UMANITY and Divinity, how essentially different! Not of creature love can it be affirmed that it "never faileth," but only of the Creator's. Mortal love, having attained the object of desire, often sinks into cold indifference; or, being disappointed in its aim, gives place to bitter hate. And why? Because *selfishness* is more or less at the root of all earthly affections, seeking *personal* gratification, while pursuing the beloved person or thing on whom the heart is fixed. Exception to this can only exist in a Being so supremely happy in Himself that, in His pure Essence, He cannot receive any additional pleasure or delight; and such perfection of Being is found only in Jehovah.

The all-surpassing excellency of "charity" or "love," as described by the Apostle in 1 Cor. xiii., is not therefore to be understood of the love of men or women; however strikingly it may in a reflective measure be occasionally exemplified among them. The Author and inward Worker of the believer's spiritual "faith" and "hope," is equally to be honoured as the Fountain of this "charity." It is the very essence of Himself, for "God is love." And in its covenant display the Father, the Son, and the Spirit equally unite, to the salvation of the elected millions who constitute the Church of God.

There are various ways in which "love" is to be regarded as superior to "faith" and "hope," but chiefly in this: while the former is so gloriously and inseparably associated with the very existence of Jehovah, the two latter, though His own gracious gifts and powerful operation, become closely identified with the redeemed creature, and proclaim that creature's dependence on the God of salvation. But without extending prefatory remarks in enlarging on this vital and interesting topic, we will try and follow our beloved poet in his evangelical definition of the truth.

"Faith in the bleeding Lamb,  
O what a gift is this!  
Hope of salvation in His Name,  
How comfortable 'tis!"—Ver. 1.

The cobwebs of creature duty, will, and power, are swept down by



this experimental assertion, without the noise and parade of theological strife. With "the bleeding Lamb" stretched on the sacrificial altar before His eyes, and a deep sense of the mercy that has enabled him, a once hardened and defiant rebel, to submit in loving faith to that soul-humbling method of pardon and justification, the poet feels that this could not be of himself, but was wholly to be ascribed to the free gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. And "what a gift!" While millions are perishing in unbelief to be made a partaker of "the faith of God's elect." Experiencing continually within the workings of potent unbelief, yet enabled notwithstanding to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart, and to desire Him as "the chiefest among ten thousand," Who is "despised and rejected of men" dead in sins, how mysterious and wonderful! To have no "hope" of salvation except "in His Name," and to possess a "good hope through grace" that that Name avails for his eternal welfare, this is the lot of every true believer, for it is the heritage of all who fear the Lord. And

"How comfortable 'tis"

when drawn forth into sacred exercise. "For we are saved by hope," Rom. viii. 24. It keeps the head above water in the floods, and encourages the fainting heart when seemingly cast out of Jehovah's sight, like Jonah in the whale's belly, to look again toward His holy temple, Jonah ii. 4. Nor can we abound in this inspiring grace unless "the God of hope" fill us "with all joy and peace in believing, by the power of the Holy Ghost," Rom. xv. 13.

To these most blessed graces must be added

"Knowledge of what is right;  
How God is reconciled;  
A foe received a favourite;  
An alien made a child."—Ver. 2.

How much is implied in this! By partaking of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" our first parents lost all "knowledge of what is *right*," and entailed the baneful effect of a perverted understanding upon all their posterity. Hence a solemn threatening pertains to all who are not redeemed by Christ from the curse of the law, and emancipated from the chains of error by the Spirit of Truth—even this: "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter? Woe unto them that

are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight," Isaiah v. 20, 21. Men who are thus subverted in heart and mind, are invariably on good terms with themselves, and entertain a high opinion of their own wisdom and prudence. But when the illuminating rays of the Sun of Righteousness, with their truth and "*right*"-displaying grace, shine in upon the soul, there is an unmasking of all self-deception.

"*Knowledge* of what is right" discovers the sin of the sinner in its exceeding sinfulness, even that which was most secret, by placing it in the light of the Lord's holy countenance, Psa. xc. 8, for "all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light, for whatsoever doth make manifest is light," Eph. v. 13. And this terminates that dreadful delusion which prevailed, and the lie previously held fast in the right hand can no longer be retained. Creature merit is consumed like the moth, and the moisture of power for spiritual action is turned into the drought of summer.

But all this is an ordeal of love and mercy. It is intended to lead to the glorifying of Christ in the believer's experience and to the heartfelt knowledge of

"How God is reconciled."

We have previously explained this phrase as employed by Hart, and on more than one occasion. It is an inversion of Scripture language, which testifies that God was in Christ reconciling the world (*i.e.*, elect Jews and Gentiles also) unto Himself, &c., 2 Cor. v. 19. But as our poet is strictly referring to the "*knowledge*" and enjoyment of *experimental* reconciliation, on the part of a soul that has apprehended the wrath of God, there is no heterodoxy in the words as so used, though it behoves us to be careful in imitating the style without a clear reference to the same point. That there is no room to challenge Mr. Hart's meaning is evident from the two concluding lines, which continue the same subject:

"A foe received a favourite;  
An alien made a child."

Such language cannot refer to the view Jehovah took of His people in His eternal choice of them in their perfect and "altogether-loving" Head, Christ Jesus. *In Him* they never were "foes," never "aliens." *In Him*, no iniquity, neither perverseness could be laid to their charge. *In Him*, everlasting love embraced them with un-

mixed approbation from eternity, and will gaze upon through eternity with the same undivided feeling.

But how different this glorious *fact* from the *feelings* of the quickened soul, bowed down under the weighty sense of its past enmity to and alienation from God! The apostle expresses his own deep-felt view of the matter thus: "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were *by nature* (not as viewed in covenant love), the children of wrath even as others," Eph. ii. 3. The parable of the Prodigal fully illustrates the matter. Come to himself, bowed down with shame and self-reproach, he returns to his father's house as one who had been a "foe" and an "alien." But the Father's love triumphs over all his son's unworthiness, and proves that his heart's affection had not failed, though his child had failed in dutiful obedience. For Divine "charity never faileth." Not without cause did David, when overwhelmed with the loving kindness of his bountiful God, exclaim, "And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" 2 Sam. vii. 19. No, indeed it is not. Therefore with equal admiration and wonder does John write: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God," 1 John iii. 1. And it is impossible to too highly value the gracious work of the blessed Spirit, Who, by means of *faith, hope, and knowledge*, grants to poor sinners the sacred privilege of tasting the ineffable bliss of Jehovah's love: for it is as our poet writes:

"Blessings, my friends, like these,  
Are very, very great,"

because they are the infallible evidence of interest in that "everlasting covenant" which "is ordered in all things and sure." Yet Mr. Hart adds:

"But soon they every one must cease,  
Nor are they now complete.  
Faith will to bliss give place;  
In sight we hope shall lose;  
For who need trust for what he has,  
Or hope for what he views?  
The little, too, that's known,  
Which, children-like, we boast,  
Will fade, like glowworms in the sun,  
Or drops in ocean lost."—Vers. 3—5.

We will not illustrate the adage of gilding gold or painting the lily, by commenting in an explanatory manner on this clear elucidation of Gospel truth. One thing only would we note: the humility of mind and heart which becomes those most favoured with an abundance of *faith, hope, and knowledge*, seeing "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." The similes of the "glowworm" and the "drops" are admirably suited to remind us what we are: the former, of our earthly origin and tendencies, the latter, of our instability, Gen. xlix. 4. Even now, when our beloved Lord shines upon us, our little light as glowworms ceases to be visible: and what then will it be when "we shall see Him as He is!" Gladly, in His dear presence, we now lose our tiny drops in Himself: and what will it be when we shall behold Him "face to face?" It is the nature of drops of water to unite and lose their individuality. And so will the Church in her completed fulness in her Lord, by parting with her corruption, lose sight of self, and all that is now so selfish, vain, and boastful in her members. In the boundless ocean of the Triune Jehovah's love the largest and the smallest drops will meet and be absorbed for ever. Glorious thought! The Lord hasten it in His time.

" But love shall still remain,  
Its glories cannot cease;  
No other change shall that sustain,  
Save only to increase."—Ver. 6.

In this the great supremacy of the Heavenly Charity is manifest. When Faith, by which we embrace the Saviour, cleave to the promises, and overcome the world and Satan, is no longer needed; when Hope, by which under the dark cloud we search for the bright light and anticipate the Lord's appearing, has no place left for its services; when all the Knowledge we derive from communications to faith from Him, Whom we have not yet seen, shall be swallowed up in the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" which shall be "revealed in us," even then shall love break forth in infinitely brighter splendour. For then shall the espoused queen put on her bridal attire, and stand at the Lamb's right hand in gold of Ophir, Psa. xiv. 9. And inasmuch as the nature of what is reserved for that auspicious time, God has revealed by His Spirit unto us whom He hath called, both Jews and Gentiles, and as we prove that every fresh and further display of Himself intensifies our love to Him, it

must be that in the eternal unfoldings of Himself our love will be capable of no other change,

“Save only to increase.”

Nor can a shade of doubt be cast over the declaration :

“Of all that God bestows  
In earth, or heaven above,  
The best gift saint or angel knows,  
Or e’er will know is love.”—Ver. 7.

In confirmation of this the wise man tells us that “loving favour” is rather to be chosen “than silver and gold,” Prov. xxii. 1, and that “if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned,” Song viii. 7. For in its nature it is infinite, unchangeable, omnipotent, and everlasting. On the Lord’s part, it binds Him to His people and them to Him for ever. And in all the dear Redeemer did and suffered for their sakes, and in all the unwearying grace, tenderness and care the Holy Spirit displays in His heart’s work, there is the strong and steady development of the Father’s purpose and choice, and the perfect demonstration that “Charity never faileth.”

We have often admired the next verse :

“Love all defects supplies ;  
Makes great obstructions small ;  
’Tis prayer, ’tis praise, ’tis sacrifice,  
’Tis holiness, ’tis all.”—Ver. 8.

There is the reflected shadow of this in deep and true human affection. How willingly blind it is to what, in the eyes of others, are glaring *defects* in the beloved object. How easily and readily it *supplies* his or her deficiencies, by a thousand excuses and palliations, which others would not tolerate. And as to the old proverb, “Where there’s a will there’s a way,” it specially holds good of the will of “Love.” “*Obstructions*” that would daunt and deter others from moving, are overcome by the energy of fervent regard. Witness Jacob’s natural love to Rachel : “And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her,” Gen. xxix. 20. Witness also the devotion of Jonathan’s spiritual love for David, in braving the wrath of his father to the jeopardising of his own life, that he might save his friend’s, 1 Sam. xviii. But what are these instances but poor and weak in comparison with “the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge ?” That love which, in full view of all the suffering it entailed

upon Him, exclaimed, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes," Hos. xiii. 14. This is the love that *supplied all the defects* of poor, unworthy Zion, in providing her with an all-sufficient salvation and justifying righteousness in the face of an accusing world and devil. This "*made all obstructions small*," causing every valley to be exalted, every mountain and hill to be made low, the crooked to be made straight, and the rough places plain, when in the fulness of His heart's desire He was manifested to take away sins. And this same love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost is at the root of all believer's devotions, notwithstanding the presence of so many fears and so much legality. For by this they are inspired, while even dreading Divine wrath, not, like Cain, to go out from the presence of the Lord, but to desire and seek Divine favour. Thus "'*Tis prayer*;" in that it secretly impels their desires for the presence, blessing, and promises of God. "'*Tis praise*;" in that it prompts their grateful acknowledgments of mercies received. "'*Tis sacrifice*;" in that, as it wrought in Him, it constrained their Lord and Master to give His life a sacrifice for them; and, as it works in them, it enables them when called to do so, to make for His sake sacrifices of self and worldly interests, yea of life itself: which none of the unregenerate can. "'*Tis holiness*;" for as it is the very essence of the Holy One of Israel, so, in its communicated form, it is the very essence of the "new man" within the believer, which "after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. iv. 24, and which, in its connection with "the fear of the Lord, is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." In fine, "'*Tis ALL*;" in that both in God and His redeemed people it constitutes the chief characteristic, without which nothing else in grace and mercy would or could have been imparted by Him, or received and displayed by them.

It is too true that there often appears a suspension of its operations in the dejected soul and in the carnally-minded believer. The former, by reason of darkened evidences and soul-desertion, cannot feel the inward springing up of this blissful principle; and the latter, in the indulgence of a worldly spirit and carnal ease, lacks the freshness of its influence in the absence of the Beloved. But

the fire still lingers among the smouldering embers, and only needs to be stirred from time to time by the Spirit of God in order to discover its indestructible vitality. Yes, we are absolutely dependent on "the Spirit of love" for all we feel of this Divine grace. And in these days in which, because iniquity abounds, the love of *the many*\* (*i.e.*, the *most*) has waxed cold, it will be well if the Lord stirs us up to unite in the precious prayer with which this hymn closes :

"Descend, celestial dove,  
With Jesus' flock abide !  
Give us that best of blessings, Love,  
Whate'er we want beside."—Ver. 9.

In His character as "the dove" the Holy Comforter is set forth as the *Lover*, in union with the Father and the Son ; and "the love of the Spirit" is no less intense than *Theirs*. The redeemed "flock" He watches over, and will surely abide with for ever. But He becomes the proper object of prayer for this that His indwelling may be known, felt, and enjoyed. And as all increase in this "best of blessings" depends upon His unctuous grace, may He graciously vouchsafe unto writer and reader that enlarged measure that shall infinitely more than compensate for the lack of intellectual gifts and worldly greatness—those idols of an unredeemed world.

THE EDITOR.

### SPIRITUAL PERPLEXITIES.



**MID** all the varied experiences through which the children of God are called to pass, the greater portion of them (if not all) increasingly enter into the words of the Apostle Paul: "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." "Burdened" with the body of sin and death, which mars all we set our hands unto, and again and again dashes all our good resolutions, we bitterly prove that "in our flesh dwelleth no good thing," and "when we would do good, evil is present with us."

We hate and abhor ourselves for those sins which so cleave unto us, and we are ready to faint by the way, feeling we have no power or might against them ; "we groan, being burdened." We ask the Lord to give us victory over them, and to grant us a daily

\* So the Original reads.

growth in grace ; but we forget the discipline that is necessary to produce these effects. And when the Lord answers our prayer by showing us the hidden evils of our hearts ; permitting some trial to come along which reveals them instead of granting our request for increased communion with Himself, and that we may be enabled to glorify Him by our walk and conversation, and be made a blessing to His church and people, we are cast down and dismayed, fearing the Lord does not hear our cries. We are tossed hither and thither ; lose our quiet anchorage in Him Who has been revealed to us as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification,—our all in all, and we are grieved and sorrow-stricken that we thus grieve Him. We cannot understand our path ; we are perplexed, and sink lower and lower, until the Lord is pleased to arise for our help, and show us that these exercises are sent to wean us from ourselves, and to lead us to cleave more closely unto the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may prove His strength made perfect in our weakness. Thus do we, by the Holy Spirit's power, cast anchor in God's unchangeable love and faithfulness, and "*wish for day.*"

In His own good time God appears for us, putting all our enemies to flight, and in His light we see light ; we then remember that—

"Lest on *our* lees *we* should rest,"

"The Canaanites *dwell* in the land,"

and also that—

"The humblest soul is most like *Him.*"

We perceive all this discipline has been necessary to humble our proud hearts, to show us unsuspected sins, to lead us to feel our own utter weakness and inability to do anything good, or to exercise any grace, that our help at all times must come from God. In *His* strength only do we stand, and through *Him* alone can we overcome, Who, "by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and Whose promise is, "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them ; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

This is a blessed portion for the child of God at all seasons, but especially so when passing through deep conflict and mourning on account of "sin that dwelleth in *us.*" May the Lord so strengthen and increase our faith, that we may be enabled to realise the blessedness of our sonship, and of being of that happy number who have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." May we have much communion with Him as our High Priest, and be enabled to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," prayerfully seeking for grace to "hold fast"



the profession of our faith, and to take heed of the exhortation, to "consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works," remembering the price with which we are bought, even the precious blood of Christ. Therefore ought we to show forth His praise, by seeking in all things to walk according to His word and example.

"O when will God our joy complete,  
And make an end of sin?  
When shall we walk the land and meet  
No Canaanite therein?"

Not in this time-state; we must wait until it pleases God to call us to lay down this body of sin and death, and to enter into the joy of our Lord. Oh, may we press forward with much earnestness, humility, and meekness until this blessed time arrives. Holding fast our "confidence, which hath great recompense of reward;" and whilst we grieve that sin will so cleave unto us, let us remember "that *our* warfare is accomplished, *our* iniquity is pardoned," and rejoice in our completeness in Christ Jesus, and that nothing can separate from His love.

As Ruth Bryan writes, "Here may I live, here may I die, resting on the Person and work—the sufferings and death—of a glorious Christ. There is no sinking there except into the abyss of love; where our sins, when sought for, can never be found." Rest assured, the more we are privileged to walk in these paths of holy faith, and quiet confidence, and peace, the more tender and lowly shall we be, abstaining from even the "appearance of evil." Sin will be an increasing grief to us, because it dishonours Him in Whom we delight, and Who is the beloved of our souls. Our one great desire will be to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things—Him "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Oh that these "good works" may abound in us more and more, and we be enabled to "walk in Christ Jesus as we have received Him,"

"Neither lifted up with air,  
Nor dejected to despair;  
Always keeping Christ in view,  
He will bring us safely through."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." Amen.

*Cambs.*

IOTA.

Faith is the looking off from ourselves, and believing what God has told us of Himself—God makes a proclamation, man will not believe it, but the Holy Spirit makes him believe it.—*Krause*.

## THE CLAIMED JEWELS.

*(Concluded from page 78.)*

There is no consent of the creature asked, but the plain, solid, and firm affirmation, "They *shall*," &c.; leaving no doubt or uncertainty in the matter. It has been said (and I endorse it), that the Lord would ransack all hell, but what He will have His own, and would drive all the devils mad rather than lose one of them! Turn to Romans ix. 15, and three following verses, "For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." Plainly proving, He will save His own: also that His sovereignty is manifested in choosing them out of the world. As a further proof, moreover, of His having a people, we find this fact in Isaiah xliii. 21: "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise." They are His by *creation*, as He is the creator of all; but they are His by *choice*, as He chose them out from the rest of mankind, and Christ redeemed them, and the Spirit quickens them: so they are His specially, in a three-fold sense, more than the world, as the latter are only His by *creation*. Again, in speaking of Israel according to the election of *grace*, He says in Jeremiah xxxii. 38, "And they shall be My people, and I will be their God." Another of those blessed *shalls* and *wills*. As God creates children without their consent, so He chooses a people in the same sense, and afterwards makes them willing in the day of Christ's power. As a further proof of election being a solemn truth, turn to Romans ix. 11: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth." And in the 13th verse, it reads: "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." If such language does not prove election and predestination nothing does! If those people who are so full of free-will, and perfect haters of free *grace*, were brought to see His sovereignty, as He has brought me to feel it, they would have to be still, instead of finding fault with Him! I see sovereignty stamped upon every thing, especially concerning myself. The following lines were given me through hearing the sovereign truths of God evil-spoken of:—

How oft we hear the world arraign  
The great Jehovah at their bar!

With envy, scorn, and with disdain,  
 They try HIS holiness to mar !  
 Whatever men may have to say  
 Against Jehovah's sovereign will,  
 Both vessels doth He make of clay  
 To honour—or dishonour still !  
 His righteous justice He will clear,  
 When at His bar condemned they'll stand,  
 Who never knew His love or fear,  
 By that despised but mighty hand.  
 His sovereignty can have no bound ;  
 His favour cannot be removed ;  
 For ALL who shall IN Christ be found  
 Have been from everlasting loved.

Thirdly. What they are, "My jewels." We all know jewels to be set store by. With what care people try to preserve and protect them from thieves. And will a glorious Jehovah be less careful about His jewels, who shall live when the world shall be no more ? To show how much He thinks of them, mark what He caused the Prophet Zephaniah to write (iii. 17th) : "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty ; He will save ; He will rejoice over thee with joy ; He will rest in His love ; He will joy over thee with singing"—very different conduct to what such meet with from the world, whether it be the professedly Christian or profane world. Although they are often treated as the mire of the streets, still they are precious in His sight ; even their "death" is said to be so. God would not make jewels for everlasting, and leave them to prepare themselves for it ; no, He prepares them, in every sense, for what He created them. There is one point especially I wish to look at respecting these jewels spoken of, and it is this : There is often a great deal of polishing required before they are brought to perfection, and so it is, in a spiritual sense. Some poor tried souls have to experience this—how they are (as it were) rubbed in first one way, and then another, till they feel almost rubbed out of life ; and it is as though they had neither soul nor body left. Hart might well say :

From sinner and from saint  
 We meet with many a blow.

Never mind the blows, if they do us no harm : we read as much—"All things work together for good to them that love God," &c. The *shining* will far outvie the *polishing*, however much pain it caused to such who are thus polished, and who feel ready to halt. I would just say (and I have as much need of the consolation as yourself), Cheer up, dear child of God, though the polishing be rough the shining shall be glorious ; and as sure as thou art polished here so sure shalt thou shine up yonder, when thy polishing days are gone, or over. And, moreover, mark this, it is left on record, Daniel

xii. 3: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Christ will shine brighter than that, and so shall we, if He be precious in our eyes; for we also read: "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1st Epistle of John iii. 2). One glance at a dear Redeemer will evidently repay for all the roughness of the way. But more: we shall be ever with Him. And now, poor tried child of God, will it not be worth as much as these light afflictions—will it not be a wonder, *how we could fume and fret over these things* as we did? When we shall bask in the sunshine of everlasting love, the glory will be such as we can form no idea or conception of. We may be, and doubtless are, counted fools now; but shall we then, when our polishing days are over, and our shining ones enjoyed? Speaking as we understand things now, it may be there is little of singing with thee at present; but fear not, thou wilt doubtless sing as loud as the rest of the blood-bought throng. Perhaps thou hast thy times, when thou canst say,

" My soul anticipates the day;  
Would stretch her wings and soar away  
To aid the song, a palm to bear,  
And bow the chief of sinners there."

Those who are now thus employed were doubtless—more or less—as low as we are now; therefore may it be our encouragement to look forward to that blessed time, when we shall be free from everything of a hurtful kind. To be separated for ever from the devil and his angels, will be no light thing, and also from this body of sin and death: for although God allows His jewels to be treated sometimes in a very peculiar way, His eye is none the less upon them, watching over them to do them good. Some jewels are more expensive than others, and some are valued more than others; but God's are all alike, all cost the same price—nothing short of the blood of a precious Christ: all are chosen by the same Father, all redeemed by the same Christ, and all quickened by the same Spirit: it took the same power in all cases—nothing short of almighty! He would not part with one for the whole world; they are His special treasure, which He delights in!

Fourthly. His mercy towards them, "I will spare them." Take away "mercy" from a needy sinner, and what do you leave him? What can he look forward to but a blank? We read of His mercies in Lamentations iii. 22: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not." How sweet that word *mercy* sounds to guilty sinners! It is not justice that they delight in, but mercy; although in the right sense they delight in justice, because it was satisfied by Christ. He fulfilled all its

demands, therefore it has no claim on any one of His redeemed ones. He stood in their stead, He paid the full penalty for their guilt; therefore justice has no claims against them. Jesus freed them all. Peter's sin in denying Christ with oaths and curses, could not sink him into hell, because he found mercy in Jesus Christ, through His atonement. A free-grace preacher (?) said just lately, if Peter when first challenged by the maid had offered an ejaculatory prayer, he would not have fallen. If so, why should Christ have said (when Peter affirmed he would go to prison and to death with Him), as recorded in Matthew xxvi. 34: "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice." Such language about the ejaculatory prayer, to me, seems to try and make Him a liar: though this, of course, was never intended by the preacher: yet if his remark be true, and Peter had done it, where would have been God's mercy? Would Christ's work have been perfect? and where would His whole Church have been had there been the slightest flaw in Christ's atonement, or error in His forewarning? Would not the devil have taken an advantage of it? But, after all, it is our mercy that there was no flaw, and no need of Peter offering the prayer, as Christ knew *he would commit himself*. Again, looking at His mercy, how beautifully it is expressed in Psalm ciii. 17: "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." We here find His mercy to have no beginning, and it is to have no end; and the fear He gives them is a preservative. Read Jeremiah xxxii. 40: "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." Mercy is at the bottom of it all; take *that* away, and there is nothing left!

When any one begins to pray, if he prays aright, it is for mercy, and it will be the theme all the journey. Paul thought it no light thing. Look at what he thought and felt himself to be in his 1st Epistle to Timothy i. 13: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." How his former conduct was the means of keeping him humble all the rest of his days upon earth. Though he had been a persecutor, still God had mercy upon him, because he was a chosen vessel of His—one of His jewels—therefore His mercy extended to him; perhaps there are few, who feel themselves so little worthy of mercy as he did. Jehovah's mercy is not straitened: look at Psalm lxxxvi. 5: "For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee." All those that call from a deep sense of their ruin, and standing in need of mercy, He will spare by delivering them out of the hand of the enemy

and from the evil day. He will spare them in spite of everything that may oppose ; He will spare them, that they shall not go to hell.

But now to come to the 5th and last part. *The time* : "When I make up my jewels." Let no free-will person imagine *that* sentence to mean that they were not His *before*. It means nothing of the kind : but it will be manifest *at that day* when He makes up His jewels, not only to angels and men, but to the devil and his angels. And what must be his spite then, if he could exert it, against all those over whom he shall never more have any power ; and what will be the pang of their enemies when they shall see them glorified ? I don't suppose, for one moment, it will be in Heaven, as nothing is to enter there that defileth ; so, in that sense, they will not see them nor Christ in His glory. But it is of no great moment, where it will take place. I sometimes wonder what the sight will be of the whole creation of mankind being present at the judgment and sentence of the wicked. We read that "every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him," (Revelation i. 7.) Those that have blasphemed Him, and set Him at nought, they will see Him ; but not with pleasure, but shame. He will then treat such with contempt, and they shall go into everlasting despair and contempt. But that day will unfold, or reveal, such secrets as are little thought of *now* ; men's actions will then be seen, their motives will then be weighed in the balances of equity and justice ; for there will be no injustice there. We read of such wishing for the rocks and hills to fall upon them to hide them from His presence. With all their boasted confidence now, they will have none then ; but will wish they had never been born. But not so with those who love His appearing—not so with those who are watching and waiting for His coming without sin unto salvation, when He shall gather the bodies of His one universal church together from the four corners of the earth, from, or out of, every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, where they shall be of one mind and one spirit, and all rejoice in the One Object—Father, Word, and Spirit—One God blessed for evermore ; where they shall go out no more from His presence. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy ; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Psalm xvi. 7. May the Lord bless these few remarks to His tried family for His name's sake, Amen.

Camberwell.

J. W. CLARK.

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The rock does not shake nor change, though the sea may ebb and flow round it.

It was good for me to come hither (to a prison) to learn a new mystery of Christ—that Christ's promise is to be believed against all appearances.—*Rutherford*.

## JEHOVAH'S COVENANT CARE.

*"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him."*—Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

'Mid the desolate crags of this sin-riven world,  
Where the tempest is born, and hell's vapours are curled,  
On the rugged, and dreary, and lightning-scathed peak,  
In His terrible eyry, all lonely and bleak,  
Jehovah has chosen to cradle and rear  
His offspring, ordained to a happier sphere.  
But fear not, confessors, stand fast in His name!  
Amid danger and weakness, temptation and shame,  
Ye shall learn to confide in your Saviour above,  
To live in His life, and abide in His love.  
O'ershadowing you is the wing of His care,  
Omniscient to guard, and almighty to bear.  
As the eagle forsakes not her shelterless brood,  
But warms them, and feeds them, yet callow, with blood:  
So His chosen and faithful ones, feeble and few,  
Their Saviour will cherish, defend, and renew,  
Till, winged, they ascend the invisible height,  
And dwell in the presence of Infinite Light.

Brighton,  
1st February, 1882.

C. H. M.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. E. VINALL,  
At Counter Hill Chapel, Deptford, on Tuesday Evening, May 5th,  
1874.

*"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*  
—Psalm xli. 1.



E see here that our attention is called to God being a *refuge*; also a strength, and a helper, and that a very present one, and under circumstances of trouble. This is not to speak of God at a distance, or as an unknown God, as Paul says, when at Athens, he saw an inscription, "To the unknown God." I understand that these Athenians worshipped all kinds of gods, and so included "the unknown God." But this furnished Paul with a subject. We are not going to call your attention to an *unknown* God, but to one that I hope you and I have some knowledge of. Mr. Hart says,

"This God is the God we adore;  
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;  
Whose love is as large as His power,  
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,  
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home ;  
We'll praise Him for all that is past,  
And trust Him for all that's to come."

This was a great deal for Joseph Hart to say ; and if we look at it, it will be a great deal for you and me to say,—

"We'll trust Him for all that's to come,"

for we cannot always do this. I will give you another of his hymns :—

"Dream not of faith so clear  
As shuts all doubting out ;  
Remember how the devil could dare"—

he did dare : he did attempt ; but it was only an attempt—

"Remember how the devil could dare  
To tempt even Christ to doubt."

There are election doubters, grace doubters, vocation doubters, and perseverance doubters. What a mercy when we can withstand them all.

I will look at the text. 1st.—It embraces Trinity in Unity. "God is love !"—don't forget that.

"Whom once He loves He never leaves,  
But loves them to the end."

God loves His people in Christ, the Son of His love. Therefore Christ will bear all the blame for ever if He does not bring all his Benjamins to God. All the Benjamins must be brought to the Father, and Christ will say, "Here am I, Father, and the children that Thou hast given me." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Do you want an evidence? Does God the Holy Ghost lead you? "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." However long you may be before you come to Him—it may seem a very long time to you—but you are on the road if you feel your need of Christ.

"All the fitness He requireth  
Is, to feel your need of Him."

Lots of people talk of Christ and mercy, and say, "O Lord, have mercy upon us." And if you say to them when they come out of church, "You ask for mercy ; what have you done? Do you really feel your need?" I fear in many cases it would be proved only mockery.

The writer of this psalm says, "God *is*,"—he does not say it in the past *tense*, God *was* ; no, but present, God *is*—past, present, and to come. When we speak of God, we must speak of Him as one eternal NOW. But when we speak of the time here, we must speak of it as past, present and to come.



The Psalmist must have had some experience, for he says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

God said there should be cities of refuge, that the slayer that killed any person unawares might flee thither. He might run for his life. "A coward," say you. O no; not a coward to run for life: for in the heat of feeling the avenger might slay such a one. So he could flee to the city of refuge. The roads were to be particularly looked to, and the word "*Miklat*" (refuge) to be put upon posts where two roads met, to show the way to the city of refuge.

"He that hath made his refuge God,  
Shall find a most secure abode."

My dear friends, "we all deserve eternal death, and thus we all are even." We have all sinned and come short of glory; but look to Jesus, my dear friends;

"None but Jesus; none but Jesus,  
Can do helpless sinners good."

Life is very precious. I dare to say, when one was near enough to see the city of refuge, he thought, My strength is nearly gone. This refuge, my friends, was to save natural life. Then how much more important is it to think of our soul's salvation, when we have the exhortation, "Flee from the wrath to come!" We must have this decided for ourselves—Are we in the City of Refuge?

"Other refuge have I none;  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

What a blessing that the Lord reveals this. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." He shall save His people from the wrath to come. What does He say? "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." This seems a great deal easier to me than fleeing to the city of refuge. This is not said to the dead,—as those in our day who call upon the dead and the blind to look unto God. I never knew a blind man to perceive things, or a dead man to feel. If there were such a one, he would be a curiosity. There must be spiritual eyesight or there will be no looking to God, and this eyesight must be given by God.

If you were in a room with the shutters closed you might think it was all sweet and clean; but open the shutters, and let the rays of the sun come in, then you will see there is plenty of dust. Just like the sun coming into the secret chamber of the heart and revealing the sin in every corner, when you say, I never thought I had such a heart, I never thought it could be so sinful. Solomon prayed for such characters at the dedication of the temple. He

said, "If there are any that know the plague of their own heart, turn and pray unto Thee; and also those that are carried captive, if in their captivity they turn unto Thee, then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and when Thou hearest forgive."

I am much inclined to think that Daniel was one of these; and though the decree had passed, yet this Daniel of the captivity was found praying night and day as aforetime, with his window open toward Jerusalem—toward where the Temple had stood. Could he see the place? No; but he could look toward it. For Solomon had said, Anyone that *looked* toward it.

"Other refuge have I none;  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

Is He your only refuge? Is He your only hiding-place?

"Hail, sovereign love, that first began  
The scheme to rescue fallen man!  
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,  
That gave my soul a Hiding-place.  
Ere long a heavenly voice I heard,  
And mercy's angel-form appeared;  
She led me on with placid pace  
To Jesus, as my Hiding-place."

When I look at the 8th of Proverbs, it seems to confirm our text. "Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and My delights were with the sons of men."

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid."

Moses desired to see the Lord's glory, and God said, "There is a place by Me, and He put him into the clift of the rock"—the rock Christ. "He is a tried stone, a sure stone, and a precious corner stone." God put Moses in the rock, and on the rock, and God declares that He is well pleased with every poor sinner that is in this rock. So He passed by and proclaimed His name: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, that will by no means clear the guilty." "But," say you, "if this is the case, what is a poor guilty sinner to do?" Friends, go to Jesus; for in Him there is full satisfaction.

"He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied; by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He hath poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bear the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

(*To be continued.*)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR AGE.

## II. PREVALENT SPIRITUAL APATHY.

*"While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept."*

Matt. xxv. 5.

**T**HUS predicted the Heavenly Bridegroom Himself; and thus it has come to pass. For yet He tarries; as yet we see Him not. "The heaven has received Him until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began," Acts iii. 21. But He will come again, and that speedily—"come, to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10.

Meanwhile "the spirit of slumber"—an evil influence from "the prince of the power of the air," has fallen on the great mass of the Christian profession, and infected both the foolish and the wise virgins with its stupefying effects. They all slumber and sleep: and in an age when, in a worldly sense, men were never more wide awake in the pursuit of the things that perish with the using. An age that, by its rapidity of motion in every department of human labour, calls for the constant putting forth of mental and physical energy.

Here and there some warm-hearted and highly-favoured ones are to be met with, who have quitted the bed of sloth and carnal ease to seek "the Beloved" in the streets and lanes of the city. Now and then may be alighted on some precious, spiritually-minded person, who is seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. But these are exceptions—rare exceptions to the prevailing rule. And these are mostly to be found in the midst of tribulation. They may be compared to the rich forced grapes in a heated conservatory—being brought to a state of *perfection* "*in love*," by the extra warmth they have experienced, both in trials and mercies, from their covenant God. These also may and do have their drowsy seasons; but they are not of long duration. They may sleep; but it is "not as do others." Roused from time to time by a knocking at the door, and by the sound of words, uttered by One Whom never man spake like, they are aroused by the pleasing recognition to open to Him, and cry, "It is the voice of my Beloved!" Happy souls! they

"hear and follow  
Jesus, speaking in His word."

If like Mephibosheth "lame in the feet," it is often their privilege to sit at the King's table, and to receive those sweet portions from Him, which they who are grovelling among the "muck-rakes" of the world are strangers to.

But the prevailing **APATHY** is, notwithstanding these cheering exceptions, a solemn and marked feature of our day. The absorption of mind in, not only the struggle for life, but the general desire for the rapid attainment of wealth, is highly prejudicial to the welfare of the soul. The abounding conformity to the world's spirit and pleasures, among those who assume the profession of religion, is also a bait and a trap to many of the people of God, who have but a shallow experience of either law or Gospel, and who are but seldom

“driven with fear, or drawn by love.”

Society with its parties and amusements tells upon them, and leads to the neglect of the reading of the scriptures, and a cold, perfunctory attendance on the means of grace. From week to week they remain in this carnal state, receiving no visits or tokens from the Lord to refresh their spirits and invigorate them in His ways. Yet they are not altogether at rest within; for a legal spirit leavens them, and often forebodes some approaching trial, by which they fear their nest will be stirred up, and they be bereaved of their comforts and prosperity.

And what of the pulpit at the present time? Are not its occupants in the main fast asleep? Not as respects their *intellectual* efforts. No: never were these more zealously applied. All the sciences are invoked, and the vast stores of popular and erudite literature are drawn upon to rouse into action. But to rouse what? Not the spiritual desires of the heaven-born soul after Christ and the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins. Not to stimulate to the giving of all diligence to make calling and election sure. Not to pursue after a richer and fuller acquaintance with the everlasting love of God the Father. For what care the popular men and their carnal flocks for these things? It is to these things they are asleep: while their peril is as great as his who sleeps at the top of a mast. These are the idol shepherds: (so-called for their devotion to their numerous idols, whether they be those of ancient Babylon, Greece or Rome, or the modern gods of Rome, or the *Æsthetics* of refined Morality and Intellectuality); and their aim is to glorify Human Nature and deify Carnal Reason.

It is thus they “lull to sleep” the consciences of the carnal throng, who gather together to listen to their *lectures*, and to worship their *talent*, and drink in the rich strains of music provided for their *entertainment*. And thus that “Kingdom of God,” which “is not in word but in power,” becomes the laughing-stock with the fashionably religious; and its preachers are despised, as was David by Michael when he danced before the ark. For them the Lord's table and the card table, the church (or grand chapel) and the opera house, the sacred anthem and the strains of Venus and

Bacchus must be blended together. And their *anti*-spiritual directors and guides are willing and anxious it should be so, and practically set them the example, in order to prove (in a sense the poet meant not) that

“Religion never was designed  
To make our pleasures less.”

Yes: they are all slumbering and sleeping. It is “the dream of a night vision” which they are enacting; in which it is “as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite,” Isaiah xxix. 8. What a fearful awakening will be theirs, when the cry is raised at midnight: “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!” Matt. xxv. 6.

It is thus the world may be full of activity in the business of life; and a blind and empty profession may be putting forth herculean efforts to *convert the world*, and religion may be so fashionable as to be able to show herself in silver slippers, and still the Redeemer’s words are fulfilled in the face of it all—“While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.” But it is specially in the sleep that has fallen upon Zion and her sons that the great enemy of souls has found his opportunity. “While men slept, His (the Son of Man’s) enemy came and sowed the tares,” Matt. xiii. 25. The spiritual *APATHY* as to the glory of Christ and the interests of the one family in earth and heaven named, and with respect to the insidious workings of error, have afforded time and scope for Satan to scatter his pernicious seed. Sects have been wakeful enough over their own aggrandizement; they have fought for forms and contended for their respective order, but the great commandment of the Lord Jesus, emphasized by its sacred repetition, to “Love one another,” they have slept over, and at times would rather have seen their opponents annihilated, than hear of their flourishing as honoured of God. For sectarists never realize this indisputable fact, that the Lord the Spirit only honours a party for the measure of spiritual truth and grace He has vouchsafed to it, while He has no pleasure in any, in what constitutes its distinctive character as a sect. This applies to all the divisions and subdivisions in Zion without exception—both in the so-called Establishment, and among Dissenters of various shades. Faithful men of God, both eminent and unrenowned, have not been confined to any party, but, as the Lord has willed, have laboured in their respective spheres, and sounded an alarm in the Lord’s holy mountain to the arousing of the many sleepers in Zion.

But their number and influence have not kept pace with the vast increase of the population, and the increase of erroneous teachers,

that they are almost "hid in a corner." Many of our great ones have no stated sound ministry whatever. Others are limited to the humblest gatherings. A deathlike sleep rests over such places as York, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle, and many others, and there are not a few, where, except for the Bibles and an occasional magazine, no sound of the Gospel trumpet would be heard. Can the prevailing APATHY be wondered at? In places where the truth is promoted it is undervalued. In places where it is longed for by a people it is not to be had, but Popery, Ritualism, Arminianism, or Apathy abound, and advance by stealth or with waving banners. The small cause of the supineness to which we refer is to be found in the ease, comforts and luxuries of life. They who lie on couches of ivory are not likely to be "grieved for the affliction of Joseph," as vi. The indulgence of the flesh in splendid and well-furnished houses, is scarcely compatible with sympathy with Zion in the dust. Great grace is needed for the enjoyment of the lawful efforts of this life, and true spirituality of mind. Though we do not doubt that the Spirit, in His work upon the few rich as well as the poor, would still, did the time and circumstances call for it, lead them forth to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and to "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus their Lord." But we see little of this *spirit*: and we have our fear that thus for some time matters will remain, to the grief of the Lord's sent heralds and of His devoted sealed ones, "who sigh and cry for all the abominations done in their midst." Vain is the effort of man. The Spirit must be poured upon us from on high, before "the wilderness" can "become a fruitful field." His sacred presence alone can rouse up the Lord's people to a proper apprehension of their present privileges, in contrast to theirs who are persecuted and martyred for Christ's sake, and constrain them both in public and private not to be slothful, "but followers of Him who through faith and patience now inherit the promises." The savour of the dear Redeemer's name, when it is "as ointment spread forth" shall animate His people with holy jealousy for His honour and glory, and enable them to estimate this world's vanities at their proper worth, and, like Moses, "to esteem the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Only when this is so then can they, while not slothful in their appointed business, be "fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord." For the market, the workshop, the counting-house, the field, or any other place, they thus prove that the Lord is not confined to locality of occupation; but dwells with the broken heart and the contrite spirit.

But let it not be forgotten that even the APATHY, which we now deplore, is one sign among the many of the Bridegroom's approaching

advent. How long it may be delayed we know not. But it is well to have the lamp burning and the loins girded, and to be like servants who watch for the coming of their Lord, that when He knocketh we may open immediately. Fain would we desire to be kept by the Spirit's power so "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," that we may not "sleep as do others."


THE EDITOR.

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### FRATERNAL INTERCOURSE.

14, Sotheron Road, Watford,  
Feb. 5th, 1882.

My dear Brother and fellow labourer in the Gospel of Christ,—

T has been our lot to meet on some few occasions, but we have not had the opportunity of conversing together on the things of God.

When I visited Edenbridge, you were one of the subjects of conversation with our friend Mrs. Chandler. And I could not help feeling my mind drawn toward you as an aged servant of Jesus Christ, and that I should like to communicate with you, to encourage you in your declining years, and give you a few of those thoughts which I trust flow from a living spring of grace implanted in my heart; as our Lord signified to the woman of Samaria: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

What poor desolate and desert hearts are ours by nature, through original sin and transgression. Every principle defiled, and every secret corner armed with rebellion against God. Our boasted ability to serve and obey God, flows from our ignorance of the fact that, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked—who can know it?"

The first step to our recovery from the effects of the fall, is a knowledge of this, imparted by the Holy Spirit. And where these things are discovered, the fruits of the Spirit will be manifested in confession and abhorrence of sin—and of our whole state of transgression—before God. Sin and rebellion must be repented of before forgiveness can be enjoyed. Not in a state of actual hostility and rebellion—but when the heart is broken and contrite, when the arms of rebellion are laid down at the feet of all-conquering grace, do we receive that rich and comforting assurance, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee."

O how gracious the Lord is to give us these discoveries of ourselves in His Own light. The Psalmist says, "Thou settest our

iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." But why do we not rebel against this discovery and become hardened in sin? Is it not because He gives gracious warmth as well as Divine light—which breaks the heart down in contrition and sorrow at His footstool? No light bestowed upon our depraved condition—if unaccompanied with efficient grace—would lead us to approach His mercy-seat as humble suppliants, to sue for pardon and forgiveness through Christ Jesus. No, we should rather arm ourselves more fully in rebellion against God.

Jehovah hath declared of His Church, that "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." What a mercy to be brought in union with the true Church, to live as humble dependents upon sovereign grace—disclaiming all merit of our own, and trusting in the Person of Christ, and His blood and righteousness, for acceptance before God.

But Christ must be revealed *in* us, by the power of the Spirit, as well as revealed *to* us by the sacred testimony of the Scriptures before He can be truly and savingly embraced. True faith in Him as an all-sufficient Saviour, is the first of this personal and spiritual manifestation and revelation of Him to the soul—the eyes being opened to apprehend the beauty and glory of His Person, the excellency of His character, and the grandeur of His atonement. Such are enamoured with His Person and overpowered with the charms of His love and grace.

This "faith which worketh by love," cleaves to Him as the great necessity of the soul in its ruined condition, and as the sea of bliss in which it finds its happiness and delight in its restored state. This is true conversion wrought by the mighty power of God. This is the new birth, which our dear Lord and Saviour enforced the necessity of on the mind of Nicodemus. It is a translation from "the power of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son." It is a resurrection from a state of spiritual death to a state of life and activity toward God. His service then becomes perfect freedom, and employment therein affords the sweetest satisfaction.

The indwelling of the Spirit of Christ gives both will and capacity to engage in the sacred service of heaven, and bestows upon us a relish for the declarations and promises of the word of God—inspires a reverence to the Divine rule—and fills the precepts of the Gospel with the sweetest melody, so that as the sheep of Christ we "hear His voice and follow Him." From this principle of grace arises real hatred to sin, separation from the world, and a godly jealousy of our own hearts.

"The world now drops its charms,  
My idols all depart ;



Soon as I reach my Saviour's arms  
I give Him all my heart."

The world "think it strange that we run not with them to the same excess of riot;" but they would no longer think it strange could they have a sip of this living and life-giving spring, and learn for themselves the sacred and sweet restraints of Divine grace upon the heart and conscience.

But I must now draw to a close. I hope in reading this you will have the charity to receive it as dictated by a sincere heart, desirous in some feeble manner to express my love to you directly and personally, before we leave this wilderness-state to cross the Jordan and enter into our everlasting rest. When we meet on those eternal hills, we shall have full opportunity to express our minds to each other, and in that state of perfection our ability to do so will be infinitely increased.

I hope you are well in health, and that you have much liberty and enjoyment in our dear Master's service. You are much older than myself, and, from what I hear, possessed of great bodily activity. I have just closed my threescore years—one half of which I have been employed in preaching the word, whilst "these hands have ministered to my necessities." Not being of a strong constitution, it is almost a wonder that I have been able to continue so long in the work; but I have had to seek of the Lord *daily strength* as well as my *daily bread*, and have found "Him faithful Who has promised." I am now under a cloud of affliction from an inward infirmity which seems to baffle medical skill. I have been obliged to give up one engagement at Chichester on account of my weak state and the length of the journey. The future sometimes looks dark, but I want to trust myself wholly in the Lord's hands, showing that "the darkness and the light are both alike to Him." I hope I shall not be a useless log, but that the God Who redeemed me will employ me whilst spared for the good of His chosen, and for His own glory.

Accept my warmest Christian love, in which my dear wife (who is suffering very severely from heart disease), unites.\*

Believe me,

Yours sincerely in Jesus, the sinner's Friend,

GEO. SKEELES.

Mr. T. Whittle, Croydon.

\*From our last month's issue it will be seen that Mrs. Skeeles has passed away.—THE EDITOR.

God hath made fair flowers, but the fairest of all flowers is *Christ*.

Christ's blood on the head is the greatest curse; Christ's blood on the heart is the richest blessing.—*Rutherford*.

## THE CROSS-BEARER.

Methought, while musing wearily  
Over some heavy care,  
This cross is far too great for me,  
Its weight I cannot bear.

If it some other size could be,  
Or different were its fit;  
I might *then* bear it patiently,  
But now I *can't* submit.

Oh, can my Saviour surely know,  
For He is kind and wise;  
And is my heavy weight of woe  
All open to His eyes?

Oh, that He would my cross remove,  
Or give me aught but this;  
I cannot see 'tis sent in *love*,  
Nor prize it if it is.

Thus in a fretful pining mood  
I judged the God of Grace;  
And failed to see that He was good,  
Or wise in any case.

When from the clouds a light  
appeared;  
The sun shone forth so bright,  
My painful cross, that I had feared,  
Was lusted with its light.

The Saviour spoke in accents mild;  
I knew the gentle voice;  
'This trial, I laid on thee, child;  
'This cross it is My choice.

'I once beneath the cross did bend,  
'And yet I took it up;  
'You only feel the lightest end,  
'And do but sip My cup.

'And will you murmur, or repine,  
'Or seek a smother way;  
'Or want a brighter path than Mine  
'To realms of endless day?"

He gently raised my drooping head,  
And wiped my falling tears;  
My Jesus smiled, my sorrow fled,  
And all my rising fears.

I hugged my cross, and loved it too,  
It seemed so light to bear;  
When I could feel that Father knew,  
And *He* had placed it there.

O Jesus, make me love Thy will.  
And feel 'tis right and best;  
My unbelieving spirit still,  
And grant a mind at rest.

Till weary, worn, I reach that shore  
Where burdens are laid down;  
To bear my heavy cross no more,  
But wear a heavenly crown.

AIDYL.

Brighton, Jan. 1882.

## CREATURE FAILING—GOD SPEAKING.

Portsmouth, April 1882.

Dear Mr. Editor,

**T**HERE is a remarkable expression in Cant. v. 6: "My soul failed when He spake," which has been variously interpreted. Experimentally, it is the emotion of the gracious soul when favoured with a more than usual manifestation of her Lord's love. At least that is how I have always taken it—whatever commentators may say. And yet the context in the same verse, will admit of another meaning too. How often, in what I may call Providential discipline, do we see creature-defection, and the consequent chiding of a loving Father. Then the child's heart fails while He speaks. The speaking may be in love; but furnace-work is not pleasant work, as I from experience can testify. "My soul failed when He spake," has been

my experience over and over again. There are sorrows. There are baptisms. This creature-failing, then, indicates anxiety, dismay, perplexity; joined it may be—but sometimes not—to a gracious grieving at the recollection of His counsels unheeded, and felt indifference to His promises.

And speaking humanly (not theologically) the times are perilous. God is speaking—and statesmen are failing. The effects of legislating in favour of the popery in Ireland, has brought about the results which every real lover of his Bible and his country foresaw would be brought about. How so-called christians can uphold such a policy as has been pursued towards truth and error in Ireland—is to me a mystery. “O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.”

Trusting you may find room for these somewhat discursive remarks.

I remain,

In covenant bonds,

Sincerely yours,

Milton.

P. H. GOOD, M.A.

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“MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND.”

September 25, 1881.

My dear Friend,—



E must remember that *all* our times are in God's hand, as the psalmist says. Not only times of sufferings, or of going hither and thither, or the times of our worldly circumstances in general, but our times for His service. He is the best judge when it is time for us to act; and although we may have planned this and that, and that with His undoubted approval, we must await His times for carrying out our plans into action. Jericho was undoubtedly to fall, but not until it had been compassed seven times. The Philistines were to be delivered into David's hand; but he must await God's exact time for smiting them. “And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley. Therefore David inquired again of God. And God said unto him, Go not up after them, turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle; for God is gone forth before thee to smite the hosts of the Philistines.” No time is lost in any enterprise which is spent in prayer about it. God never forgets His promises; but He likes us to remember them, and to show by our pleading that we do so. High up is peace. It is when we go high enough that we become calm. It is God's Spirit only that can lift us up into all communion of light; it is that Spirit that can lift

us high enough. Nothing good can be done without Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit. Through Him our thanksgivings are received, and through Him there comes an answer to our prayers. The Lord knoweth how to give good gifts to His little ones—rest in weariness, joy in sorrow, strength in weakness, life in death, victory in conflict: and so I have found it. Dear friend, is your experience the same? Then let us rejoice together, taking for our motto the grand old text, “Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice.”

Yours affectionately, in Jesus,  
A SILENT ONE.

To Mr. Pepper.

THE LATE MRS. A. FUNNELL, OF LEWES.

To the Editor of the “*Gospel Advocate*.”

Southover, Lewes,

April 17th, 1882.

My Dear Sir,—



HE enclosed short account of my late dear wife was read by Mr. Welland in Jireh Chapel on the Sunday after the funeral. Many friends having expressed a wish to have it, I thought I had better have it put in the *Gospel Advocate*. Now, dear Sir, if you have no objection, will you insert it in your next issue?

I sincerely hope you are well, also Mrs. B. and family.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly in Gospel bonds,

Mr. Baxter.

ALFRED FUNNELL.

My dear Pastor,—

Southover, Lewes.

You kindly asked me to put down a few of the last sayings of my dear wife. I now comply with that request, but wish to say that I did not take them down until after her death.

I pass over more than forty years of our happy union. For some years she was greatly afflicted. I shall never forget the 26th of December, 1881. Her speech was much affected. We were sitting together. She burst into tears and said, “I have been afraid the Lord would take you first. What could I do if left alone?” I said, “My dear, I think from all appearances it will not be so.” She said, “Oh, what should I do without a refuge!” then quoted the following lines with great emphasis:

“‘Other refuge have I none;  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee:’”

and after a pause said, “If I perish, I will perish at His feet;” shortly after repeating the same words. Many other things she

said at the time, but I could not understand what they were. At another time I quoted the verse :

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
On Thy kind arms I fall;  
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus and my all."

She said, "That is my verse."

Often she expressed herself a great sinner, but all her hope was in Christ. She was in great distress once, and said, "I fear the Lord has forsaken me." I replied, "He will never do that; the Scriptures say, 'Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end:'" which seemed to relieve her mind. She said to a dear friend, "The doctor thinks I shall not be here long." She replied, "It does not much matter, if it is to a brighter and better home you are going to, does it?" "Not if I were quite certain," she said. A few days after the same friend asked, "Are you satisfied? have you the comfort you craved for?" "Yes," was the reply. "You are quite happy?" "Oh, yes." We could understand but little after this. Nearly the last words we heard were, "Rock of Ages—peace, peace." She breathed her last at 12.25, March 24th, 1882.

I give a few extracts from a letter written to me by a friend who visited her often, especially during her last illness. She says: "I have put down a few things said to me at different times by the dear departed one. She was very reserved for some time, but after she was enabled to open her mind she spoke freely, and told me much of her exercise of mind, and when the Lord first implanted His fear in her breast, and of the good hope she had at times felt under the ministry of the late Mr. William Crouch, of Wadhurst, and Mr. Fenner, of Hastings. Also she received much comfort of soul from the ministry of Mr. Vinall, sen. Before she joined the Church she had deep searchings of heart before the Lord, which caused her to cry unto Him, to beg Him, if she were not right, to make her so."

Her affliction was of that nature that at one time she suffered under great depression of spirit, followed by much excitement and often irritability, over which she had no control. On one occasion, not long before she was confined to the house, she had been restless all night, and wondered how it would be with her in the end. She was in great agony of mind, and felt afraid she had no foundation to her religion. In her distress she cried to the Lord, when suddenly the words came with much sweetness, "He is a Rock;" and she felt she was resting her soul's salvation upon Christ. Nearly the last time she attended the week evening services she said she had had a good time. The hymns were sweet to her, and

Mr. Morris was led to ask for what she felt she needed. Mr. Welland was also very encouraging, and she found it good to be there. The next day (Saturday) she was very comfortable, and longed for Sunday that she might go again to the house of God. She did so, but had no comfort. She grew weary of the service. Her nerves were in such a state she did not know how to bear anything. She was much distressed about this, thinking that, if she were a child of God, she should not feel so. She was in a very calm state of mind during the greater part of her last illness, feeling that all would be well in the end.

My dear Pastor, I cannot express my thanks to you. My wife looked for your daily visits anxiously, and although she said but little, I can assure you, my dear Sir, she greatly prized those seasons and enjoyed your prayers, saying, "How very kind of Mr. Welland. How much mercy there is in this affliction!" Her attachment to you as a minister, from the first time she heard you down to the last was very great, and she frequently expressed great concern for your comfort and prosperity.

I can truly say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

Your affectionate deacon and brother in the Lord,

ALFRED FUNNELL.

Mr. M. Welland.

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### THE REIGN OF GRACE.

Blind watchmen often cry aloud,  
And boast of proud free-will :  
They labour hard within the cloud  
Of nature's darkness still.

No power but His, Who dwells on high,  
By His almighty grace,  
Can make a sinner groan and sigh,  
And run the heavenly race.

O Holy Ghost, reveal Thy power,  
Apply Christ's precious blood !  
And in Thine Own appointed hour,  
Do bring me near to God.

My doubts remove, my fears subside,  
My soul can then rejoice ;  
For evermore with me abide,  
And let me hear Thy voice.

Thy voice can comfort my poor soul  
When I in darkness dwell ;  
It makes my wounded spirit whole,  
And brings me forth from hell.

God's witnesses are often bound  
With chains of unbelief ;  
They prostrate fall upon the ground  
Till they obtain relief !

Molested with some evil thought,  
By *night* as well as *day* :  
But Christ has all my battles fought,  
And bore my sins away.

Predestination ! O how grand !  
From all eternity !  
Which rescued all the blood-bought band  
From sin and misery !

J. FREEMAN.

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## Letters by the Household of Faith.

LETTER BY THE LATE MR. STEDMAN.

Southborough, June 26, 1879.

Dear Friend,—

Everything looks sad and gloomy, and most sober-minded persons' hearts, I think, are failing them for fear of those things which seem coming upon us, and very few people know what to do. "The Lord reigneth," and His word must stand,

"His truth prevail,  
And not one jot or tittle fail."

How desirable to be enabled to obey the word: "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and hide thyself until these calamities be overpast: for the Lord," &c. *His* (people) have a chamber—a word in which they have been made to hope—a doctrine, an attribute in which they have been enabled to rest. I only yesterday was agreeably surprised by the remembrance of the first word I ever remember to have been given me to hope in, viz.: "There is hope of a tree if it be cut down." My hope arose out of this. *I was cut down.* I am to this day that "cut-down tree" very often in my feelings. Another word was: "This is the whole house of Israel, which say, Our hope is lost, our bones are dry, and we are cut off for our parts." The promise made to these, the Lord's slain people, is often now a chamber into which I am enabled to retreat at times: and I believe these little chambers will be as so many retreats to me in a stormy day to the end. Such I may say of the doctrines of "effectual calling," "the pardon of sin," "the Spirit of adoption," "the bringing up out of the grave," "the horrible pit of David," and "the pit of corruption of Hezekiah," and other deliverances the Lord has wrought; and but for these I have not at times any ground of hope. In one or other of these I am enabled to tell the Lord my present distress, and often find I can get near Him, when enabled to get into one of these closets, where He has in days past been pleased to bring me. "Thou hast been my help;" "Thou hast known my soul in adversity," &c. I find it sweet at times to remind Him of former mercies, and I sometimes believe He is not angry, but manifests the contrary; that He is pleased with a poor bairn's prattle in this way by granting a smile or kiss—a touch or soft word, which breaks the bone of contention, melts the heart, warms the affections, relieves the soul, lifts the affections above. "A few more rolling suns at most" I can, I hope, sometimes sing with pleasure.


G. STEDMAN.

## THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

## No. IX.

## THE HEALING OF THE IMPOTENT MAN AT BETHESDA'S POOL.

John v. 1-16.

EXT, in the order of time, to the healing of the man sick of the palsy, stands this miracle of the Son of God,—according to the ablest chronologists,—though most ordinary readers would regard it as following the healing of the nobleman's son, as recorded in the previous chapter. But if this be of little moment, the dealing with the difficulties of some of the details of the present narrative imposes a weight of responsibility on any injudicious treatment of it. For it will be perceived by readers of the Revised version that a part of the 3rd and the whole of the 4th verse is omitted from the text; though a note in the *margin* states that "many ancient authorities insert (the same), wholly or in part." The Lord, by His Spirit, so guide our meditation that we may be preserved from error.

We are informed in the opening of this chapter, after the things referred to in chapter iv., that "there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem," ver. 1. This feast was the Passover; and it was the second the Saviour had attended since His entrance on His public ministry. The third was identified with His crucifixion. But we thus behold Him fulfilling the Ceremonial law, the same as the Decalogue, by His unfailing obedience. "Made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," it is no unimportant declaration that the enlightened believer discovers in the account of his Lord's attending each feast. By His holy assiduity, as the Father's servant, in waiting on His will and pleasure at all times, our Heavenly Lover made that "feast of fat things and of wines on the lees," for all His chosen poor and needy, which the Holy Spirit reveals to their faith, and enables them to partake of "in due season."

"The sheep market," or rather "sheep gate" (as it is better rendered in the Revised version); through which the animals intended for sacrifice were brought into the temple, is next adverted to (ver. 2). The passage of Jesus through this would foreshadow His being "led as a lamb to the slaughter;" though it is not said that He passed through it on this occasion. Near this gate was the



famous pool called Bethesda, i.e., *The House of Mercy*, or, according to some ancient authorities, its name was Bethsaida, or Bethzatha—a matter immaterial to the subject before us. Suffice it to say that, although great research has been made into the question of the true site of the “Pool,” it is not satisfactorily determined.” Dr. Robinson conjectures it to be identical with what is now known as the ‘*Fountain of the Virgin*,’ and ‘the same with the “*King’s Pool*” of Nehemiah, and the *Solomon’s Pool* of Josephus.’ But its interpretation, *The House of Mercy*, and the Redeemer’s miracle there, will perpetuate Bethesda in the affections of Zion’s children; for *Mercy* and Jesus Christ are inseparably connected, in the purpose and promises of the Father; neither is any display of this gracious attribute of Jehovah made out of Him.

“Five porches,” we read, existed in this place, in which “lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered,” ver. 3. Various have been the senses in which these “five porches” have been treated, in the spiritual use of them by commentators. Huntington says: ‘These five porches may be emblematical of the different points of light in which the elect of God may be considered. 1st. They were from all eternity in the purpose of God. 2nd. and, as chosen in Christ Jesus, they may be considered as in Him: according to Jude, “*preserved in Christ Jesus and called* :” Jude 1. 3rd. They are likewise in the promise of God: “*A seed shall serve Him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*” “*The children of the promise are counted for the seed.*” 4th. They are in the covenant of grace: “*I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant: His seed will I make to endure for ever, and build up His throne to all generations.*” And 5th. They must all be brought into a state of grace, and to be of the household of faith. Others, who say ‘*The healing waters are truly to be had in Christ*,’ affirm the “five porches” to represent His ‘five-fold’ Name, as given by Isaiah in chapter ix. 6, and as traceable in Psalm lxxxix. thus: Wonderful: *see* verses 5-13; Counsellor: *vers.* 14-18; The Mighty God: *vers.* 19-25; The Everlasting Father, (or Father of Everlasting Life): *vers.* 26-33; The Prince of Peace: *vers.* 34-37. Now all these, with various other deductions, are to be viewed as scripturally instructive and profitable *adaptations* of the “five porches;” but it is unwarrantable to regard them as infallible *interpretations* of what was positively represented thereby. The

word of God covers a wide field of spiritual signification; but lessons *derivable* from it must always be carefully distinguished from that which constitutes its *direct* meaning; otherwise there would be no end to fanciful applications of its all-sacred truths.

The congregated "multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered," correctly represents the gathering of sensible sinners to a place of "*Mercy*." Who but they can prize it?

"Mercy is welcome news indeed  
To those who guilty stand;  
Wretches, who feel what help they need,  
Will bless the helping hand."

Impotence, or utter weakness, the certain result of the Fall, is spiritually felt by none save the Divinely "sought out," quickened and convinced. All beside vaunt their power to accomplish what the Lord requires, and cry with foolish Israel, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient," Exodus xxiv. 7, and eleven ask with the silly rich one, "What lack I yet?" Matt. xix, . But even as the after exhibition of infinite holiness, amid the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai, made the self-sufficient ones fail at the presence of God, and beseech they might not hear the Lord's voice any more, but that Moses might intervene as the mediator between God and themselves, so a stripping discovery of, by the Spirit's application of the law in its spirituality, brings down the boasted ability of the flesh, and renders the soul feelingly potent, like the "blind, halt, and withered."

"*Blind*,"—the soul can no longer trust its natural intelligence. The eye of the keenest natural reasoner can never perceive, so as to realize, what Jesus Christ is in His person, work, offices and characters. It can never penetrate the mysteries of God's kingdom and Word in company with heart-feeling. It can never trace the experimental pathway in its strange ins and outs, ups and downs, crookedness and straightness. "*Halt*,"—the soul is impeded in its advances by its lameness: for "the legs of the lame are not equal:" when it would do good, evil is present with it. It can neither run nor walk in the way of the Lord's commandments by the unaided power of a fleshly inclination. While it gropes for the light like the blind, it stumbles as if it had no eyes, and is "ready halt" at every besetment of the world and devil, and at every obstacle that arises in the course of the Lord's dealings in grace or providence. "*Withered*,"—the sinews of human vigour are dried

up, and a painful stiffness, or dead paralysis, affects the sluggish heart and mind in the things and ways of God. Such a combination of spiritual ailments will strip the crown of pride from a boasting head, and lay the soul in the dust before the Lord of the whole earth. And, led by the Spirit to the *Pool of the House of Mercy*, there it will wait, in hope of experiencing the same healing others have been blest with.

But now we arrive at the first difficulty connected with the text. In the Authorized version we are told that the motley throng were "*waiting for the moving of the waters. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had,*" vers. 3, 4. Now all this explanation is rejected and expunged as a spurious interpretation by what is termed "a consensus of modern editors, including Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort." Nor may the judgment of such a formidable array be lightly set aside, especially when endorsed by the Revisers in the New Version. But if the evidence of men like the learned Dr. Bloomfield is to be regarded it would appear that the prevalence of Materialism in our day, which dislikes all such reference to spiritual agency as is indicated by "an angel going down at a certain season into the Pool and troubling the water," is at the root of the chief opposition raised against the text. After critically expatiating on the subject at some length and quoting various learned authorities and MS.S., Bloomfield says: "The words must therefore be retained, and interpreted in the best manner we are able. . . . The plain and obvious meaning is, that God had endued the Pool with a preternatural healing quality, and, in the communication of it, employed one of His ministering spirits; not however, as we have any reason to think, *visibly*. Certainly, the *circumstances* of the narrative (as that only the *first* who entered after the commotion of the water was healed, and that *all* disorders, not those only which medicinal waters heal, were cured, and that *instantaneously* and *invariably*) utterly exclude the notion of anything short of miraculous agency. And if the circumstance of the *angel's going down* be thought (as it is by Doddridge) to 'involve the greatest of all difficulties in the Evangelists' [account] (which however is far from being the case) we may (with that commentator and Bishops Pearce and Mann) suppose

that, the sanative property was supernatural, and communicated during a short period, as typical of the 'fountain opened for the purifying of sin by the atonement of the Messiah (the *prophecy* of Zechariah being thus realized into a *type*), and that the Evangelist in thus mentioning the descent of the angel, speaks according to the opinion of the Jews, who ascribed all the operations of God's Providence to the ministry of angels.' Yet even Doddridge (while writing thus) admits that they and St. John had 'reason so to do, since it was the Scripture scheme that, these benevolent spirits had been, and frequently are, the invisible instruments of good to men.' Surely, then, what was right in *them* cannot but be right in *us*, and the common view (of the words disputed being genuine) is the more to be adhered to, as giving no countenance to a most unsound and dangerous principle, on which I have animadverted in my Note on the *Demoniacs*, Matt. iv. 24—"viz., that which denies the agency of evil angels and spirits, and attributes their working to merely natural causes.

We have thus extensively quoted from Bloomfield's Greek Testament in order to meet learning with learning—not indeed our own, but of scholars who are not to be despised. To this we will briefly add the testimony of one of the chief Revisers connected with the New Version, Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, who while deciding for the omission under consideration, and calling it "*a gloss*," says: "It is interesting to note how *a gloss*\* like this has found its way into the narration, and, by ninety-nine out of every hundred readers, is now regarded as an integral part of St. John's Gospel. We meet with it very early. It is found in the Alexandrian MS., and in the Latin and early Syriac versions.† Tertullian [*in the 3rd century*] refers to it. This points to a wide acceptance from the second century downwards, and points doubtless to the popular interpretation of that day. It explains the man's own view in verse 7, and the fact of the multitude assembled round the Pool, (verse 3). The bubbling water moving as it were with life, and in its healing power seeming to convey new energy to blind and halt and lame, was to them as the presence of a living messenger of God

\*The italics are ours.—The Editor.

†Dr. Bloomfield asserts that there is only the authority of 2 MSS., 2 very inferior versions, and Nonnus for omitting the words. Dr. Gill does not refer to any opposition to the genuineness of the passage.—The Editor.

They knew not its constituent elements, and could not trace the law of its action, but they knew the Source of all good, Who gave intellect to man and healing influence to matter, effect to the remedy and skill to the physician; and they accepted the gift as direct from Him. Scientists of the present century will smile at these Christians of the second century. The Biblical critic *is glad that he can remove these words from the record*, and cannot be called upon to explain them.”\*

We fear we have wearied the patience of some of our readers by the above lengthy extracts. Others will accept of their importance on the ground of the greatness of the subject and the impossibility of dismissing it off hand. The summary of the evidence compels us personally *to accept the words as genuine*, which the scientific “Biblical critic *is glad he can remove from the record.*” The natural “bubbling up” of the spring discovered and described by Dr. Robinson, and believed by him to constitute the ancient Pool of Bethesda, and which has an intermittent flow, we cannot receive as one and the same thing as “the troubling of the water by the angel.” Neither can we receive the statement relative to the angel’s visit referring to the superstitious and medically ignorant notions of the people, for in the form it appears it is plainly the declaration of the Evangelist.

The whole transaction beautifully displays what the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews sets forth; namely, the infinite superiority of the Son of God to angels. Up to the time of His incarnation they largely figured in the Lord’s dealings with His ancient Israel. And their name in a prominent way, as the Angel of the everlasting covenant, the Son of the Father bore, and still bears. But His glory in the instantaneous healing of the poor wretch, for many years lame, without the intervention of the watery medium, was a revelation of the super-excellency of His glory. It is still the mission and delight of angels “to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,” but they cheerfully resign their every post of honour to Him of whom the Father hath said, “Let all the angels of God worship Him.” No need to seek their aid, or implore their intercession, as do the blinded Romanists. In Jesus all that poor sinners need is found; His name, authority, and power being equal to all emergencies, sins, and sorrows.

\**Commentary on St. John.* We may add the italics in the concluding paragraph are ours.—The Editor.

In the "waiting for the moving of the water," a lesson is conveyed to the Christ-needing soul: for it was "at a certain season" rendered miraculous. So our redeeming Lord has His set times for manifesting His healing power. And while only one (he "who first after the troubling of the water stepped in") was made whole of whatsoever disease he had," it is otherwise with the Saviour's all-sufficient grace. For with Him "the first shall be as the last, and the last as the first;" and numbers have no effect upon His unlimited power. O it is well to be continually waiting *upon* Him and *for* Him. Faith and patience are indeed put to the test in so doing; but they are richly rewarded (and all of the freest grace) "in due season." The influence of this sure persuasion made the Psalmist say, in order to quiet his troubled heart, "My soul, WAIT thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence, I shall not be moved," Psalm lxii. 5, 6. And this holy confidence is crowned with the prophet's words: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that WAITETH FOR HIM," Isa. lxiv. 4. We now return to the Pool of Bethesda.

"*And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years,*" ver. 5. So long a period bespeaks the confirmed nature of the complaint, and that human skill had not availed to cure it. And admitting the lack of medical knowledge on the part of the Orientals, to which all travellers unite in testifying, the long-standing nature of this poor man's infirmity, which had deprived him of the use of his limbs, rendered his case hopeless on all natural grounds. Nor is it possible to say how long he had lain at the pool. But the Saviour knows nothing of human impossibilities. They only serve to magnify "His eternal power and Godhead."

"*When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?*" Ver. 6. Sudden and unexpected usually are the Lord's interpositions, confirming the poet's words:

"The saints should never be dismayed,  
Nor sink in hopeless fear;  
For when they least expect His aid  
The Saviour will appear."

Not that we regard the man in this narrative as a saint; but he serves to illustrate the dealings of the Redeemer with His infirm

and desponding children. "For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left." Deut. xxxii. 36. As little as this poor creature anticipated his cure in the manner, and at the time it occurred, do most of the Lord's people expect their various deliverances to be wrought. And how probing the question, "*Wilt thou be made whole?*" It seemed like the mocking of the hope and misery of the helpless object before the Saviour. But no: it was but a test of faith or unbelief. And no faith was exhibited in the reply, "*Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.*" Of itself this answer would not proclaim the man to be wholly destitute of grace; for, in other instances, wherein the Lord Jesus displayed His healing power there was mingled a large measure of dull diffidence. And every child of God may find working in his own heart the same want—if not of knowledge and understanding, yet of faith, when he is brought face to face with the promises of the Lord in His written word in the midst of apparently hopeless circumstances. It is then the eye, not seeing the Lord, wanders after the creature, and in vain, and cries, "I have no man to put me into the pool." Thus felt David: "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." And because man fails it is concluded that Jehovah will also fail to deliver. And when, as with this poor man, the distressed child of God sees others able to *step down before him*, and partake of the healing flowing from the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, it adds to the depression already felt, and prompts even to despair."

"*Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk.*" Ver. 8. Thus does the voice of Omnipotence silence the bewailing language of creature weakness. Thus does the hand of Omnipotence impart what human reasoning could not believe to be possible. Thus does Omnipotent compassion stoop to the low estate of creature misery. And in every *spiritual* case that Omnipotence will prove that it never mocks a humble hope or deceives a sincere trust. "*WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE?*" shall only, in the case of His elect, quicken the desire of the heart to a more earnest appeal for help, and answer the same with "*RISE, AND WALK.*"

"*And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.*" Ver. 9. The

instantaneous effect attending the word of the Lord Jesus proclaimed his absolute Divinity; for, unlike prophets and apostles, He never invoked the name of God, in a manner indicative of dependence, when performing His miracles. "HIS WORD WAS WITH POWER." No doubt of His ability ever could have place in His mind. No effort could He make without the firmest assurance that the desired result would be accomplished. And this, believer, is the JESUS, with whom thou hast to do. This is He Who saith, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28. This is He on Whom your soul's salvation depends, and Who is now enthroned as your Advocate with the Father. In the means of grace "*the moving of the waters*" may be often lacking, but the healing shall not be delayed beyond the time appointed. "For He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints," and make good His word, "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

It is not within our present purpose or compass of space to follow the effects of this miracle on the carnal Jews. It was on the sabbath—a day often honoured of God in the old Testament times for spiritual working, though distinguished by His resting from earthly creative acts; and which finds its counterpart in the present Lord's Day. The sabbath may be defiled by carnal men and formal professors and Satan and his children be silent. But let the Lord work and there is rage and malice enough. As to the spiritual condition of the poor creature who was healed, Hunting-ton remarks: "This man does not appear to me to be one of God's elect, for there is not one covenant blessing pronounced on him—such as his being called 'a son of Abraham,' or (told) that his 'faith had saved him,' or (it being said) 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' or 'go in peace,' as was commonly done, when the recipient of a cure was a chosen vessel. Christ came into this world to save sinners, and took the name of Jesus because He would save His people from their sins: but He says nothing of salvation to this man, but leaves him under a strict command, '*Sin no more*;' and intimates that a heavier judgment would ensue if he broke it—'*lest a worse thing come unto thee*.' But man has no power against sin. A strict commandment, armed with a threatening sentence, makes sin rage the more, and Satan labour the harder. . . . From the whole there does not appear one favourable symptom that this man belonged to



the election of God. He, with many others, receives temporal mercies, deliverances, and benefits, when not one thing that accompanies salvation appears upon them."

We cordially endorse the above remarks of Huntington; while in conclusion we again direct attention to the whole subject as fraught with rich instruction to believers on the Son of God. *The House of Mercy* still abides, both where Jesus reigns above, and in the Lord's courts below. The healing waters are ever flowing in the faithfully proclaimed gospel; but now as then, it is the Saviour's voice that does the work. A soul made willing meets a willing and almighty Saviour, and a certain cure crowns the longest waiting, and avails in the worst of cases. May the blessed Spirit awaken in every anxious soul the prayer of the spouse: "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken unto Thy voice: cause *me* to hear it."

THE EDITOR.

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NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. E. VINALL,  
At Counter Hill Chapel, Deptford, on Tuesday Evening, May 5th,  
1874.

(Concluded from page 147).

Then the writer of this psalm must have had some knowledge of this refuge, and of "the great rock in a weary land."

When the dove went out of the ark, she could find no rest—no peace, so she returned to the ark. So does the poor soul to the rock Christ, for in Him doth all fulness dwell. Some think to have an outside religion is all right; but I say, it is all wrong—all wrong; we must have heart-work.

"True religion's more than notion;  
Something must be known and felt."

To them that believe Christ is precious. Has he been precious to you? Has there ever been a time when you could say, He is precious?

"Sinners can say, and none but they,  
How precious is the Saviour."

Can we say He is our Hiding-place?

The next part of our text is—Strength. "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches."

We will look at a man who, we should have thought, had no weakness? Who is this but that valiant apostle of Jesus Christ—Paul? He says, when writing to the Corinthians, "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell or

whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth), such an one caught up into the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth), how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter. Of such an one will I glory, yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. Though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool, for I will say the truth; but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." Some take this to mean one thing; but I take it to mean two. We may take it as we like: all of us have the privilege of reading the Bible, and we may enjoy our own opinions in anything non-essential. I think the thorn is one thing and the messenger of Satan another. Some people think it was sin. I don't believe Paul ever gloried in sin.

God's people have thorns. Some people are poor—brought up poor, and have every prospect of dying poor; but if they are rich in Christ, they are not poor. Pride is a thorn to some people. I am inclined to think that most people are proud. There are various forms of pride. Some like to be very neat; their pride consists in that. Some like to be very showy, and some like to be thought a great deal of. Take care your pride don't have a downfall.

Paul's thorn was to prevent his being lifted up above measure. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

There are various ways of waiting upon the Lord. Wait upon Him in prayer, and in the means of grace, and in meditation. Often in meditation we receive a meal, and go on the strength of it for many days.

How many persons have come under a sermon languid and weary, and so refreshed by a word or two that has been spoken, and it has appeared to them so striking they have said, "He must have known all that I have been thinking about; but I think I am a stranger to him." And thus they have found that which they have spoken in the closet proclaimed on the house-top.

We find in Hebrews that "women received their dead raised to life again," others "out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant

in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens." I never was in the army naturally, and never wish to be; but I think there must be many faint hearts among the soldiers the day before a battle. There must be many who would wish to turn back, and I dare to say some try one thing and some try another. But, my friends, in such times God is the best to fly to when you hear the great lion roar. He has made me tremble many a time. When you hear the enemy coming in with a blast as if to blow all that is good away, then you fear; but you fear most in the night.

John Bunyan is quite right there. For in the night the enemy has the most advantage. There are many who have read the Holy War. I don't know whether you are familiar with it. The night time is the time for the enemy, as Bunyan says. The Mansouliaus went out at night after their day's victory with the doubters. Captain Credence, Captain Experience, and Captain Good-Hope, all went forth from sally ports animated with their day's victory, and soon came up with the enemy and astonished them all at first; but Diabolus soon rallied his forces. The Devil is very like a wild beast: for they see less in the light, and go forth and take their prey in the night-time when it is dark. But presently Captain Credence was wounded, and had to hobble back into his quarters again. They well remembered that night's work. So don't engage with the enemy in the night-time, but in the day-time when you have light.

"In Me ye shall have peace." "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

At another time they went forth to meet the Diabolonians. The enemy came forward, but there was no Emmanuel in the field; but there was a messenger from Emmanuel that after another onset Emmanuel would be there. Then the enemy began to wonder what was the matter. Then came Emmanuel into the field, and met Captain Credence. What a dreadful battle this was for the Diabolonians. A great many of them were trodden under foot, and Diabolus himself had to flee and lie down in his den to mourn his defeat. But if he has lain down you must not think that he is dead for all that. Hart says:—

"To be steadfast in believing,  
Yet to tremble, fear, and quake—  
Every moment be receiving  
Strength, and yet be always weak."

"To be fighting, fleeing, turning,  
Ever sinking, yet to swim;  
To converse with Jesus, mourning  
For ourselves, or else for Him."

"As thy day so shall thy strength be." What a mercy to have strength for the day; but we are too often anxious about the morrow.

But let us look at our text : " God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

He is not only a help, but " a very present one." We often feel weak in time of trouble. The Apostle Paul says : " When I am weak, then am I strong." Have you not proved it so ? Have not your prayers been like a stench in your nostrils, and seemed like an old horse going round-and-round a mill. I seem to get quite tired of them ; and sometimes I think that God must have got quite tired of me. But presently our experience is a little different, and the poor soul cries to God, and says : " O Lord, I am in trouble, undertake for me." " Lord in trouble have they visited Thee ; they have poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them."

When the word " pour " occurs, I think it means something more than just dribbling out. It seems that you have so much to say that you must pour it out to the Lord. Jacob said : " I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." You know Jacob greatly feared his brother Esau. He says : " Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau ; for I fear him lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children." And before day-break was come Jacob was left alone ; for he had sent his wives and children over the brook before him. " And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the break of day." And He said : " Let me go, for the day breaketh." And Jacob said, " I will not let Thee go until Thou bless me. And He said unto Him : What is thy name ? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel ; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked Him His name, and He said : Wherefore is it thou dost ask after My name ? And He blessed him *there*." I think there is a great deal in that : " And He blessed him *there*."

" Trust Him, He will not deceive us—  
Though we hardly of Him deem ;  
He will never, never leave us,  
Nor will let us quite leave Him."

" God is our refuge and strength : a very present help in trouble." We do not get the help before the trouble ; but we get it in the trouble. " And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not ; I will lead them in paths that they have not known ; I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight : these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." " I will bring the third part through the fire." Ah ! poor things ; they tremble when they come near the fire and feel the heat of it. " I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried ; they shall call on My name, and I will hear them. And I will say, It is My people ; and they shall say,

The Lord is my God." All the children of God have troubles. Perhaps one child of a family gets into trouble about religion, and his parents say, Our boy seems getting into a strange way. How dull he seems; and perhaps he has no one to tell his trouble to. But I wonder whether he goes to his chamber and tells his God about it. I should think he does.

There are some people who do not mind how they get rich, and others are anxious to get into debt. Whereas it is not so with the child of God: for if they have a debt they want to pay it as quickly as they can. I will add an instance and then close. There was a poor man died in debt. He was a good man. What? say you, a good man die in debt? Yes, my friends; you don't know but what he might have died suddenly. When he was dead the poor widow went to the prophet lamenting her loss, and said: "Thou knowest how that thy servant my husband feared the Lord, and the creditor has come to take my two sons to be bondmen. And he asked her what she had in the house. She said she had not anything but a pot of oil. So the prophet told her to send and borrow all the vessels she could, and shut the door and pour out the oil. It kept pouring till all were full. She asked her sons to bring her another vessel. They replied: There is not a vessel more, and the oil stayed. What was to be done now? She was to sell the oil and pay the debt, and live upon the rest. How wonderful it was! O, say you, I don't expect such things now. O don't you? What God do you worship then? because the God that I worship is the same. I am one that believes in miracles. My life is a miracle, and you would say so if you heard it. "God is our refuge and strength?" Is He your refuge, your life? May God give you faith to trust in him.

"Trust Him, He will not deceive us—  
Though we hardly of Him deem;  
He will never, never leave us,  
Nor will let us quite leave Him."

Amen.

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## JESUS IN ALL THINGS.

A LETTER BY MARY GREENWOOD.

Mid Lavant, Chichester,

December, 1855.

My dear Brother in the Lord,—I have not of late found an opportunity of writing to you, but I have many times wished to do so. I received with pleasure the letter you kindly wrote to me while I was in London, and the contents of it caused me to rejoice on your behalf. Our God has done great things for us, whereof

we will be glad. Will my brother (the Lord enabling him) soon favour me with another letter? and let me hear a little about the way in which our dear Lord is dealing with him? It is a "right way," be it which it will, however much "sight and sense" may urge that it is wrong. O the blessedness of being brought to "walk by faith, *not* by sight!" and again, O the blessedness of knowing where the power comes from which enables us thus to walk. I hope my dear brother is becoming more and more weak and helpless in himself, so that all the day long and for all things he is obliged to keep "looking unto Jesus;" knowing feelingly that without Him he could do nothing. May the Lord give you deeply to enjoy that sweet paradox: "when I am weak, then am I strong." I long to feel yet more of what Paul felt when he wrote, "I take pleasure in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Well, we have the same blessed source to draw from that Paul had, and the same Author and Finisher of Faith to do all for us. Sometimes I prove that I have no desires at all heavenward, and then desires spring up as boundless as I feel the love to be that kindles those desires. A few hours since I felt like a stone (and not "a *lively* stone") and now I am beginning to feel that a *small* "fulness" will not satisfy. I would like something beyond the ocean's fulness. Well, He Who gives desires will satisfy them to the uttermost. May He enlarge ours!

The Lord in His great goodness has brought me back again to Lavant, after an absence of a year-and-a-half. I returned on the 21st of this month. He has very blessedly brought to my remembrance, since I have been back, some of His gracious dealings with me during the last 18 months, and I have been broken down in love and wonder, feeling that no language can set forth what I have proved of the faithfulness and loving kindness of our God. Truly He *is* "the God of *all* grace," and to make Himself known to my soul He has been leading me in fresh paths, making "a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters;" doing wonders, and giving eyes to see them. If I could tell you a hundredth part you would break out in praising Him as I long to do. Come let us own those are sweet bitters, and pleasant pains, and welcome crosses, which He makes the means for endearing Jesus to us, and for giving us the blessedness of knowing what it is to have "fellowship with Him." However much Nature shrinks at times, I am obliged to go on crying in the words of a hymn given to me many months ago:

"Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me!  
Still all my prayer shall be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee."

During my stay in London, the Lord in His great goodness led me amongst a few of His dear people who are gathered together at Rehoboth Chapel, in Princes Row, Pimlico. Mr. Freeman has lately been appointed pastor to them. I have cause to bless the Lord for His goodness on that point, for I found very sweet refreshment in communion with them, which I hope, if it be His will, may be continued by writing. I love to be shown the Lord's hand in *all* we meet with, and every day, and to see His hand is guided by His love. There *seemed* many difficulties in the way to hinder my meeting with the poor despised flock, of which it is my blessed portion to form a part, and I could not but admire the way in which hindrances were removed. O my brother, *nothing* is too hard for our God, and this He has been especially proving to me of late. I really feel ashamed of the wretchedness of our hearts in ever "limiting the Holy One of Israel" with our unbelieving "Can this be?" when He has said, "It shall be done." I was ready to say that it was *impossible*, placed as I was in London, that the same blessed nearness and sweet communion with the Lord could be kept up. "I *must* be robbed," my unbelieving heart said. But "the Lord is *our keeper*," and His great power and tender watchful care were displayed in a manner that melted my heart in love and thankfulness. He has promised to be with us in *all* places whithersoever we go, and we find Him faithful to that promise. Where should we stray to, and whither end, were His upholding power withheld for a moment? Bless His name, even when He permits us to take a step in our own way, His purpose is of love, to humble and prove and show us what is in our hearts.

My dear brother, I long to hear that you are growing in grace, and in the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ. If so it is in tribulation's path. The Lord has given me (of late) many joyful reaping seasons, but before such times, He has led me through a time of "sowing in tears." How sweetly they are set over against each other! Oftentimes in seasons of joy I have shrunk at the thought, "What is coming?" and again, while groaning under trouble or temptation, comfort has come in the certainty that I shall come again with rejoicing, bringing the sheaves, and praising Him who makes *all* things work together for our good. I grow very jealous of every feeling of comfort, or ease, or quiet, if Jesus Himself is not enjoyed in it. I must say, to the praise of His grace, He keeps up *continual* exercises, to oblige me to be ever crying for help, or praising for deliverance. I have not seen much yet, since my return, of the dear friends in Chichester—they are, I believe, much as usual. On Sunday last, I heard a name-sake of yours (a Mr. Welland) preach at Zion. I have not heard whether you are likely to come this way

at present. Wherever you may be led I hope you may be enabled to exalt our precious Lord. May He make Himself so dear and precious to your soul that you *must* speak out of the abundance of your heart and tell your hearers what a God your's is—what a Portion, what a Rock, Guide, Counsellor, Friend, and Father. My soul thirsts to know more of Him—of His *unsearchable* riches. With kind Christian love to Mrs. Welland, and wishing you the best blessings during the coming year,

Yours, my dear brother,

In the best bonds affectionately,

MARY GREENWOOD.

### “PLENTEOUS REDEMPTION.”

*“Let Israel hope in the Lord : for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.”—Psalm cxxx. 7.*

Blind, dead is the man who no beauty can see,  
 Thou radiant Centre of wonders, in Thee !  
 What prospect can charm us where Christ is not found ?  
 With Him we are rich, we have all, and abound.  
 If friends are uncertain, forgetful, and few,  
 His love is unswervingly faithful and true—  
 A friend who is nearer than mother or wife ;  
 A Lover Whose death is a fountain of life.  
 The Father's eternal complacence in Him  
 Is a sea of delight where a sinner may swim—  
 A bosom of infinite paps, whose full store  
 Springs ever and ever to nourish the poor,  
 And freely descends to the weak and oppressed  
 In multiplied pardons and banquets of rest.  
 Be each sin as a devil, each lust as a hell,  
 His blood is almighty to purge and to quell ;  
 Were their numbers as vast as the sins of our race,  
 What are numbers when cast into infinite grace ?  
 No shade, and no straitness in Jesus is found,  
 But extensless extension of love without bound.  
 Dear Saviour ! My spirit rejoiceth in Thee !  
 Thy bountiful mercy that floweth to me  
 Hath depths that no wisdom created may trace,  
 And heights that are lost in the heavens of Thy grace.

Brighton,

2nd March, 1882.

C. H. M.



## THE INFALLIBLE REMEDY.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. FALKNER.

NO. V.

Margate, April 28th, 1817.

Dear Friend,—

I am much obliged by your kind letter of the 19th inst., and glad to hear you are safely removed to your new habitation with a prospect of being comfortable. May it please Almighty God to give you and yours many a happy day in the enjoyment of the comforts of this life, with a heartfelt sense of His goodness in providing you with the blessings needful for your time-state, which is an unspeakable favour, when we consider the great distress that is now in the world.\*

The account you have given me of the state of bondage you experience, is that which all quickened souls feel. "The wicked have no such changes, therefore they fear not God; they are not troubled as other men." But the Lord has promised to hear the sighing of the prisoner: and I do verily believe He has been pleased to manifest clear answers to my distressed soul, when there has been but few petitions put up, only through the intercessions of the Holy Spirit with groanings that could not be uttered. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddles not with its joy." Darkness may endure for a time, but Christ, the true "light of life," will very soon arise with healing in His wings, making manifest that true comfort and consolation which shall chase the mists of darkness away. The sensible presence of Christ is such "a feast of fat things" as will fill the soul "with all joy and peace in believing," and will be more than full payment for all the distress it has passed through, of whatsoever nature it may have been; which I hope ere now you experience in measure: but should the darkness of the mind and bondage of the soul continue, I should be happy to prescribe some suitable medicine.

The only physician skilled in your case is Christ alone; you should go to no other. The highest honour you can put upon Him is to take Him at His word. When the woman with the issue of blood put forth an act of faith upon the power of Christ, the cure was immediately effected. May God give you the power to do likewise, and the Object of your faith shall make you whole; your wound of unbelief shall cease to run, and your strength and confidence in Christ shall continually increase till you come to the stature of a man in Christ. I shall treat a little

\*An allusion to the sad effects produced by and following the Peninsular War, which had only recently terminated by the utter overthrow of Napoleon Buonaparte; when the price of food was very high, almost equal to a time of famine.—The EDITOR.

on the benefits of this medicine, of which I hope it may please the good Spirit of God to enable you to make a perpetual plaister, and to apply it to the heart—the fountain from whence comes the greatest part of our troubles in this life. This medicine being constantly used will perform the most wonderful cures ever known by any man in this world, and it is certain to make a safe cure. Your *first* aim should be to *see* the medicine: *secondly*, to *pray* that it may be applied: *thirdly*, to *live* upon it: *fourthly*, to *trust* in it. The medicine is the true Balm of Gilead, which is no other than the blood of Christ. Now, as I am satisfied that you belong to the family of the faithful I shall speak of the medicine to you as such. First, you should consider that the blood of Christ reconciled us to God the Father, as the Lawgiver, when we were enemies; our wicked works manifesting the same, we being in the common case and condition of all mankind. Secondly, we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, the price paid down, which was as much as was demanded for our transgressions. Thirdly, we are pardoned through the efficacy of the blood of Christ, which is equivalent to all demands. Fourthly, we are sanctified through the blood of Christ; this being the washing away of all the filth from the body mystic, or the perfect cleansing of the whole Church, or of all the elect. Fifthly, we are redeemed from a vain conversation by the precious blood of Christ, and the Spirit of God applying the same, our consciences are purged from dead works, or such works as shall not profit us. Sixthly, it shall cleanse our consciences from the guilt of sin; it shall take away all accusation; remove the filth of sin and the love of sin; and keep the soul in that continual peace that the devil, the world, and sin shall never remove. It is a fountain open continually: its virtue is the “same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” It will “never lose its power.” Whatever troubles you have, it will always take the sting away. It cures the body. It cures the soul. It is a cure for all our woes. It has “obtained eternal redemption,” and it is all our salvation. May the blessed Spirit bind this about your heart; and never, never lose sight of it, for all our benefit is contained in it.

Thus I have endeavoured to set before your mind some of the leading benefits contained in the blood of Christ. This balsam never fails to cure all that ever apply to it. One hour's meditation on it will be of more use than pouring over the malady for fifty years. Again, think of that predestinating love of God to your soul in quickening you when you were dead in sin—pouring out on you the Spirit of prayer—drawing you from every false way and work, to Christ Jesus—setting Him before your mind as the only Saviour of sinners—inviting you to come to Him just as you are, promising that He will never leave nor forsake you, and telling you because He

(Christ) lives, you shall live also. The invitations, promises, faith, covenant blood, and all the blessings which God's hand and heart have to bestow, are made sure to us, we being the children of God through the quickening power of the Spirit. "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed," and heirs of the promises; "which are all yea and amen in Christ," and made sure to all that partake of the love of Christ.

May God the eternal Spirit enable you to drink abundantly, as the beloved of the Lord, out of the river that makes glad the city of God, and it will remove all your guilty fears, and make manifest your dwelling in God, and God's dwelling in you. Let the love of God to us in Christ Jesus be your daily drink, and feed on the Lamb of God Who bore our sins in His Own body on the tree; and may the good Lord keep you in the full enjoyment of the blessings of a triune God, Father, Son and Spirit. Amen.

You wish to have the account of trials, &c., I have passed through for now these four-and-twenty years continued, but it is not in my power to grant your request. I have been bred a soldier in the camp; have always been at war, and always a conqueror through the Captain of Salvation. I believe I never had at any one time of my life so much opposition as at present; but victory is certain. My enemies fight with malicious lies, slanders, and such like, which are weak against the truth. My weapons are mighty, through God, and I think I may defy the devil, the world, and sin to get the victory; for "the Strength of Israel will not lie," nor "suffer His faithfulness to fail." And the covenant between God and my soul in this matter is, that while God is pleased to give me food and raiment, and keep the spring flowing, I will neither fear men nor devils. Christ alone is my fear, therefore "I will not fear what man can do unto me."

With respects to \_\_\_\_\_

I remain your sincere friend, for Christ's sake,

N. F.

#### A "LITTLE FLOCK" STILL, OR STILL A "LITTLE FLOCK."



HE recent statistics of our secular press on the attendance at public worship, while presenting to the minds of the Lord's flock a very saddening tale, may, I think, teach some important lessons of reproof and also of comfort.

If I am not mistaken, this is the result: Out of the entire population of our earth—above fourteen hundred millions—only three hundred millions (at most) are nominally Christians! and amongst these nominally Christian nations what a mixture is included,—Papists, &c., &c.

But coming to our own country,—the land of bibles, churches, missionaries, sermons, schools, Revivalists, Salvation-Armies, religious newspapers (so-called), and multitudes of efforts and organisations, the very heart of Christendom—after fifteen hundred years' effort, What is the result? This, that out of a population of thirty-five millions, eighteen millions seven hundred thousand make no profession of religion, attend no place of worship; in other words, only 53 per cent. of the entire population even nominally acknowledge God. But when we come to dissect again, how sad is the result. How many, or rather, how few, of the outward worshippers are worshippers "in spirit and in truth?" Without judging—for God alone can decide—this much we know, "that all are not Israel" who are called such. How many attend public worship from form or custom, to satisfy conscience, to meet a friend, for respectability, &c. May we not fairly decimate our congregations; and oh! what a result would turn up, saddening and disheartening to God's real child, if the strength of His real church depended upon numbers, or if the mark of His own Gospel were universal triumph. But the opposite is God's mark. Still it is a "little flock," and Divine purpose still follows the Gospel everywhere. "It shall not return to Him void, but it shall accomplish His purpose and prosper in the thing whereunto He hath sent it."

What are the lessons, then, which may be learned from this subject?

I. These revelations ought to carry a severe reproof to all the host of Free-willers. Oh, say many, "the Gospel has failed in its design," or "the Church has missed her mission,"—basing this foolish idea on the erroneous notion that the design of the Gospel and the mission of the Church is to convert the world. Vain and unscriptural assumption! Still we cannot blame, but pity these poor deluded ones, knowing that God only has taught us better. Rationalism and Free-will fill our churches. They are twins by one father, the devil, whose skill consists not always in ridiculing religion, but often in imitating it, as the Egyptian sorcerers with their rods imitated Aaron. But as then Aaron's rod swallowed up theirs, so will it be again. Satan uses professing Christianity to serve his purpose as much as infidelity. Rational religion! This is the cry of the day. "Growing intelligence," say they, "has outgrown old ideas of Bible truth," and in these "enlightened days," this "advanced age," men want something which natural reason can accept—a "progressive religion to meet the times." So say thousands who pass for Christians, and preachers also. Another class, whose teaching meets at the same point, though slightly different, argues that all that is needed is to send out preachers; and religious truth propounded to a man of fair intelligence will

naturally commend itself to his faith and judgment; that all men have power to accept it, to embrace its "reasonable claims," and become Christians. Yet with all this boast of reason and human power, What has it done? Has it filled our churches? Oh, ye Babel-tongued army of earnest workers, always running to meetings, and ever ready to tell others what you do, but never what God has done for you, look to results. Would not many of these very zealous folk, always in a blaze of excitement, be more in their place at home with their families, where they might do good? and is it not too true that the more zeal some have the more harm they are doing? Here is the reproof from these statistics. God has not owned their much labour to convert men. How could He? He has never sent them. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Men who ridicule the "old paths," who preach "another Gospel," who deny "Divine sovereignty," "entire ruin," and the "need of the Divine Spirit" to conquer man, who make man stronger than God; who make religion only a science or system of doctrines, to be taken up at will, just as one may believe any other system of doctrines, these fruits betoken the nature of the tree, and their fruits (their doctrines) insult God by making Him a disappointed Deity. What a strange contradiction! "The Gospel was intended to convert the world," say they. God longs for the salvation of all men. Man has power to accept the Gospel," and yet, after 1,800 years of effort, so small a result! But for blindness, surely all must see the absurdity.

But II. This not only brings reproof, but comfort to God's own child.

How so? It confirms the Scriptures. There I read that instead of a universal spread of Christianity, or a growing accession to the Church, the very opposite is predicted. God has said it. "In the last days there shall be a great falling away—a departing from the truth," men having "itching ears," the prevalence of "doctrines of devils," so that men "would not endure sound doctrine." There I find the object of the Gospel is to "gather out" of the world a people—His own, His elect, which were chosen in Christ and given to Him before the world was. Has God's purpose failed? Has He been defeated? Has the gospel lost its mission? Must something else be added to it? Nay, child of God, you know it is not so, "His purpose must stand, and He will do all His pleasure." Yet it is as true this day as ever, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." It is as true to-day as ever, "My word, which goeth forth of My mouth shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish My purpose and prosper in the thing whereunto I have sent it." Mark: His word, and from His mouth. It is as true now as ever, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed"—not one has missed, not

one more has been added—"All that the Father hath given to Christ shall come to Him." The true church stands secure. "God's own flock," though "little," though a flock of slaughter, is walled around; strong, not in free will, or fleshy goodness,—but in Him: and though the "great he goats," who laugh at doubts and fears, and the weepings and mournings of God's children, may "thrust at them," and by erroneous doctrine, false shepherds may "draw away many after them," pleased and charmed by this rational religion, free and easy, never offending anybody's doctrine; we know that "the sheep will not hear them:" for, saith the glorious Lord, "They know My voice, and a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." O the impregnable defences of Zion! A highway—"no ravenous beast shall go up thereon;" and though, like Bunyan's pilgrim, often afraid, the lion is chained, and the sweet word of a covenant God is sealed home: "Fear not, Jacob, I have redeemed thee, thou art Mine." O the mercy, to be able to discern between things which differ; to have the soul based upon "the sure mercies of David," eternal mercies! covenant favour!! What child, taught of God, could sit under a ministry of free-will, creature-endowments, rationalistic christianity? Not one. They must have "children's bread." They want something, which when "reason fails with all her powers," "when they walk in darkness and have no light," "when the heart is overwhelmed within them," and "God's ways" are mysterious, "in the sea"—a sea of trouble, temptations, and snares; something strong, unchanging, eternal, His covenant—His POWER, HIMSELF, Who is over all, in all, and for all His people. May you and I, dear reader, know what it is to walk by faith, not sight—to have Him as ours. Then if there are few with us, or we stand alone, His presence will satisfy. Amen.

*Liverpool.*

B. V. SCOTT.

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### THE POWER OF GRACE.

Dear Mr. Baxter.

In looking for an old letter the other day I came across the enclosed substance of sermons of our late and highly esteemed pastor Mr. G. Abrahams, and thinking they would be esteemed by the Church of Christ, and that they had been buried long enough, I send them to you. They were written by my beloved brother Joseph, who was called home to glory in the year 1853, in the 29th year of his age. He was called by grace under the blessed ministry of Mr. Abrahams, at the early age of 16, rather in a remarkable manner, on Christmas morning, 1840. After some of the family had gone to chapel that morning, he came home, and it came on to rain, so his dear mother said to him, "I think, Joseph, you had

better take some umbrellas and go and meet them coming out ;" he did so ; and got to chapel when the discourse was half done. And soon after he sat down Mr. Abrahams again repeated his text, Isaiah lx. 1 : " Arise, shine, for thy light is come ; and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee ;" and the word entered with divine power into his heart ;\* and in his bible he makes this remarkable foot note to this verse :—

" This pure white stone contains a name,  
Which none but who receives can read !"

And in a letter he wrote some time after to his dear sister, who was at that time on her dying bed, and now in glory, in speaking of these words, he says, " Arise ! What was I to arise from ? Was it not from sin ? Arise from darkness into the marvellous light of the Lord : from the power of the devil unto God : from desponding fears, and from dark despair. To arise and consider that the way I was in was the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death. And was I to arise and shine out of this state. Yes ; but not in such a hurry. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be afterwards added to you. It was near ten months before ever I was led to see any light at all ; and it was while Mr. Abrahams was preaching our dear uncle's funeral discourse. His text was, Job v. 26 : " Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like a shock of corn cometh in his season." O what a day that was to my soul ! I shone because the light of the Lord came into my soul. Without Christ shines there is no more light in the soul than there is light in a blind man's eye naturally. This light is the love of Christ in a poor sinner's heart. Whom He loveth he scourgeth, and chasteneth and trieth as gold is tried ; and the soul that has ever had any of the love of Christ in his heart will surely come forth pure and spotless before the real presence of his Maker. " This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." I am sure of it, as I know that my God reigneth in Zion. To know the height, the depth, the breadth, and length of Thy love, makes my poor soul rejoice. It is deeper than the hell that I was in. Oh yes ; wider than the sea ; higher than the heavens, and longer than the earth. Dear Lord, canst thou save a poor polluted sinner ; the wretch that feels his need of Thee ? " Fear not, thou worm Jacob, for I am with thee ; be not

\* Dear Mr. Abrahams, on being told how the word had been blest to him, informed us how his mind had been exercised the day before this Christmas for a text, and could not get one. The Christmas morning came ; no word, no text, till he was eating his breakfast, when the dear Lord dropped the word into his heart with power, light, and unction, so that he felt it was some special word ; which it proved to be in my dear brother's case.

dismayed, for I am thy God ; I will uphold thee by the right hand of My righteousness." O Lord, make known the everlasting truths of Thy Gospel.

Dear sister, when this heavenly love comes into the soul, it bringeth such sweetness with it, and so fills the soul with love, that I am glad to retire to any corner to pour out my soul in prayer and praise to my God, the living God. O Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him ? and the son of man that thou regardest him ? When this love comes into the soul, the glory of the Lord comes with it, and rests upon it. Dear sister, as the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth thy soul for a manifestation of the love of Christ, to speak peace to thy heart, and to say to your soul, "I am thine, and thou art Mine." But you have this love in you, though perhaps have not had it shown to you ; for "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." Jesus himself, you see, pronounces them blessed. O Lord, strengthen my dear sister ; kiss her with the kisses of Thy lips ; manifest thyself to her in a clearer manner than Thou hast done ; O Lord, Thou seest her weakness : if it is Thy will to receive her to Thy dear self, Thy will be done. O Lord, be Thou her guide, her strong rock, her covert from the tempest, her hiding-place. O what a blessed shelter to have Christ for a hiding-place. O my Jesus, be thou her all—even unto the sleep in Emanuel, God with us. Ho, ye that are heavy laden with sin, weary of this dying unbelieving world ; you that have a longing desire to be with Christ, come unto Me. If you come by faith I will in no wise cast you out. I will give unto you rest. Dear Lord, be thou with a worm, that every moment feels a greater need of Thee. How unworthy am I, to speak before such a loving Lord. Behold, Lord, I am vile ; and in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. Behold, what manner of love is this that the Father hath bestowed, that we should be called the children of God. Dear sister, I stated in a letter a few of the dangers of the way which you questioned me upon. Did I think that the Lord had brought me over those troubles which were mentioned, and whether Christ had ever said, "Son, thy sins are all forgiven?" Dear sister, on Monday last, these words came : "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool." "I will put my laws into *your* mind, and write them upon *your* heart." "*Your* sins and iniquities will I remember no more." And I firmly believe that when Christ sows the seed of love in the hearts of His people, their souls are so quickened, so enlivened, that they pass from death unto life, and into condemnation never will come. Oh, no ; no condemnation can be brought against the sons of God. A purchase for them He has wrought, and washed them in His blood. His work He will never leave. All that His heavenly Father gave



His hand securely keeps. True faith is this : Blessed are they that that have not seen, and yet have believed. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. I have destroyed death, and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil.. Then a quickened soul never dies ; it only sleeps in Jesus.

Dear sister, you asked me what society should I choose if I had my choice. If not kept by the Almighty, you might guess what society ; but as the Lord has shone in at the window of my heart, I would rather suffer affliction with God's people rather than have any earthly pleasure that fadeth away. O, no, not for any earthly treasure would I change my joy ; but rather lay up treasure in heaven, where moth doth not corrupt, and where thieves cannot break in and steal. O Lord, let the Sun of Righteousness descend and warm our cold hearts. Now, O Lord, would I bless Thee for thus filling our natural mouths with the things most fit for our frail bodies. Dear Lord, we pray Thee to fill our souls with gospel manner ; with the bread of eternal life ; but most of all we thank Thee for Thy most precious blood. 'Tis this blood that all our hopes of heaven depends on. O may Christ, in His infinite mercy, lead us ; that we may love Him. Bring out once again my dear sister ; bring her, Lord, to her mother's house, within Thy church, that she may learn that affliction worketh for good to them that love God ; and "our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ;" there to drink of the spiced wine of the juice of the pomegranate.

" Let not conscience make you linger ;  
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;  
All the fitness He requireth  
Is, to feel your need of Him.  
This He gives you ;  
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

Dear sister, you said that you were a quickened soul. It is none but the Almighty God can quicken a soul. Whom He quickeneth, He loveth. May the grace of God the Father be with you ; may the love of God the Son dwell richly in you. O may His love rest and abide with you for ever. May the sweet communion of God the Holy Spirit be with you now, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath," "that we should be called heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us, and gave His only begotten Son as a propitiation for our sins." "He was made sin for us Who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." May the love of Christ dwell richly in your

may you be rich in faith, waiting for the coming of our Saviour.

Adieu, dear sister,  
From your loving brother,

JOSEPH.

Weeks before his death he had this remarkable dream. In a dream I dreamt I was dead, and that my soul was a very formed thing, somewhat like unto the figures you see in churches,—cherubim's heads with wings. There was also another with me, but who it was I did not know. We were hovering and hovering about in the air, till suddenly, as it were by chance, we came to a place with gates similar to Nunhead cemetery, at which the porter opening asked us what we wanted? We said we wanted to go in. He answered, "You cannot come in here," he said, "how you have spent your life! see how you have spent your sabbaths of late; you cannot come in here." I said, "I know it; but tell me not of them, for I came here for the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour." Finding he did not open the gates to us, we both flew over them, and kept hovering and hovering about in the air for about three weeks, till of a sudden I found myself alone at the same place; and I knocked for admission, as I had done before; and again the porter opening asked me what I wanted here. I answered, I wanted to go in. He replied, "You cannot come in here until you are purged." I answered, "You can purge me;" and immediately I saw a line of blood descend to me, and I put forth my hand and took a handful thereof. He said to me, "You must have that." "Oh," I said, "I must have that." "Well," he said, "What will you do with it?" I immediately applied it to my head, my nose, my tongue, my hands, and my feet. The gates immediately flew open, and I went in.

The dream was repeated; and there his dust now lies in sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection. A few days before his resurrection, he said to his father, who was then sitting by his bed, "Don't you see them, father?" pointing his finger to the corner of the room; "They are waiting for me, and I am going to go."

There is nothing between a guilty sinner and a Holy God but the shedding of blood and the righteousness—the imputed righteousness of Christ. *Everything* short of this is Papacy." G. COMBE.

The Gospel is such a declaration as condemneth all manner of unrighteousness, and preacheth the only Righteousness of Christ.

LUTHER.

## THE LOVE OF GOD.

The love of God !

O wond'rous theme ! Immortal  
strain.

Tho' wonders teem in mortal brain,  
It's brightest beam, is lost amain—  
In love of God.

The love of God !

Delightsome thought, we shall it  
share :

In vain 'tis sought for, anywhere,  
If not in oft and fervent pray'r—  
In love of God.

In love of God

Ne'er groweth faint, but e'er is  
strong !

Makes sinner saint ; and loveth long ;  
A blest restraint to old or young—  
In love of God.

The love of God !

What wide contrast to human love !  
A prey to blast, so prone to rove ;  
And fading fast whene'er we move—  
In love of God.

The love of God !

Whate'er can break ? which for His  
own,  
The heav'ns must shake, the earth  
be gone ;  
Than, to forsake, those fix'd upon—  
In love of God.

The love of God !

Here some mistake : Tho' He create  
For His own sake—bear righteous  
hate  
To some He make, the crook is  
straight—  
In love of God.

The love of God

Doth mercies spread o'er all man-  
kind :

Yet tho' His bread we all may find,  
We mercy need—that feeds the mind  
In love of God.

The love of God

Hath difference : while some receive  
His providence, that with life leaves,  
Alone His saints for ever live—  
In love of God.

The love of God

In brightest hue is seen if with  
His justice too : instead of death  
As our just due, gives living faith—  
In love of God.

The love of God

Can guilty spare : here hope I have  
His love to share ; since He will save,  
For heav'n prepare, who mercy  
crave—  
In love of God.

The love of God !

O, matchless grace—by nothing  
bought.

Hath it a place in reader's thought ?  
Would I might trace that thou art  
taught—  
In love of God.

The love of God

Is thy enquire ? Oh me possess.  
Such keen desire in righteousness.  
This kindled fire within thy breast—  
In love of God.

D. BROOKS.

## IRELAND, THE PAPACY, AND THE CURSE.



ET us with all calmness and solemnity take advantage of the sensation produced throughout our country, by the horrible assassination of Lord F. Cavendish and Mr. Burke, to enquire how far Rome may be linked with those abounding atrocities in the sister Isle, and how the self-evident curse of the Most High there prevails. To politicians we leave the discussion of party errors and the bandying of recriminations. "Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth." That our rulers for a long series of years have been conceding to the cry of "Give, give," raised

by the horseleach (Rome)'s two daughters—**SECULAR AND SPIRITUAL assumptions**,—is only too manifest: and their success has been according to their merit—a heritage of discord, confusion and rebellion.

It will sound strangely in the ears of some, that England forced Popery upon Ireland; but it is nevertheless too true. Seven hundred and ten years ago Ireland was more Protestant than England. It was our Henry II. who for the sake of obtaining dominion over Ireland engaged with Pope Adrian, to compel by force of arms the Irish to renounce their evangelical views, and to embrace the popery that then ruled the English National Church. In vain did the Irish resist. Henry prevailed, and as the consequence Peter's Pence (a penny from every family) has since been paid into the papal treasury from conquered Ireland. No wonder our God has never blest the union of the two countries. Nor will he until instead of confirming the Pope in his seat there, the grand effort of England be to evangelize that fruitful, barren land. A land whose natural resources are wonderful; but which is rendered barren by the curse of God.

And what is the history of Popery in every country? It is that of oppression, deceit, murder. The yoke of the priesthood has ever become in course of time intolerable. Its hold on the people only relaxes with the development of its true character, in rapacity, licentiousness and tyranny. When an absolute monarch rules in a popish realm, under his shadow the hierarchy for a season may defy popular dislike, and flourish under his patronage and protection.

Ireland's position in this respect is quite an anomaly. Subject to a power which for the past three centuries-and-a-half has been professedly Protestant, and she in the majority of her people not having returned to the principles of the Reformation, and her land largely owned by Protestants, she has ever been an easy prey to the insinuations and suggestions of her Jesuitical *holy* fathers.

Let it be admitted that in many instances great wrong has been done (if not personally by the absentee landowners, by their agents); that oppression with poverty has often ground the natives down to the dust, has this led the priests to show *their* sympathy in relaxing *their* demands? Have *they* lowered the condition, 'No penny, no paternoster.' Have *they* striven by an honourable effort to enlighten the people, to guide them in a peaceful and legal path to the righting of their wrongs? No: such a course would have been fatal to themselves. They have availed themselves of the people's ignorance for accomplishing the vilest purposes. Personal wrongs, real or imaginary, have been turned to the Papacy's account. Bitter hatred of Protestant England has been with untiring zeal infused

into the people's minds, and the dissolution of the existing Union between the two countries has been set forth as an indispensable necessity. The ignorance, dirt, squalor, laziness, which stigmatize every priest-ridden land, form good soil for Rome's seed, and "the harvest becomes a heap" of confusion "in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow. When famine prevails, Protestantism is the cause. Whatever ill may happen, it is traced by the crafty priests to the same root.

The Jesuitical maxim that the end sanctifies the means, puts the whole of Rome's accursed machinery in operation, and has ever done so since Ireland submitted to the fatal yoke imposed on her by the power of England's Henry. Seething sedition, open rebellion, cruel mutilation of animals, secret assassinations, open murders, wholesale butcheries, all have been called to play their part from the days of the Stuarts in the efforts of Rome's priesthood to sever Ireland from British authority. Each quarter or half century has witnessed some frantic display to this end. And our rulers, with few exceptions, have learnt nothing. They play into the hands of the authors of nearly all the mischief. They aim at conciliating the irreconcilable priests. These men who, by the key of the confessional hold the lock of the people's consciences in their power, must of necessity be privy to most of the crimes committed. By their threats or admonitions they can command the evil-doers to perform the most atrocious work. Yet for the benefit of these men our senators legislate, and hope for peace by these means.

But it is not for Rome's interest for Ireland to be satisfied and in peace. The beast was seen by John to arise out of the restless sea, Rev. xiii. 1—the convulsions of the Western Empire; and the distraction of nations still affords its finest opportunity for mischief. It is ever plotting in quiet times; it is powerfully active in troublous times. In politics, it can be intensely Conservative, Liberal, or Radical. In religion, it equally becomes "all things to all men." But its aim is to mystify and confound. Hence when an awful occurrence, like the murder of the Chief and Under Secretary for Ireland occurs, or in a great movement like that of the Land League, the priesthood can and do act opposite parts; the one appearing to condemn in their pastoral addresses and appeals what the other upholds and defends. Thus is dust blown into the eyes of our senators and thousand of professing Protestants. And this is what we witness at the present time, and Rome with her hands "defiled with blood and her fingers with iniquity" hides herself from public view behind this double screen. And how long will England remain blind to this?

The day is fast coming when the prediction shall be fulfilled in England (one of the ten horns) as in the case of the other nine. "In France, Italy, and other priest-ridden continental countries the people

have long been growing weary of the dominating power of priestcraft. Infidelity, its firstborn, laughs at the imbecility of its parents; and unable to distinguish between truth and error derides everything sacred. But the Lord Who reigneth will doubtless use this as other things to be Rome's scourge. His purpose is that all the ten horns "shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Rev. xvii. 16.

The "FLESH" of Rome is not her *spiritual power*, but her *body politic*. The overthrow of Austria by Prussia, and then of France by united Germany, has paved the way for this. But every country, even infatuated England and America,—for the latter sharp pains and conflicts being certainly in store,—shall come to the resolute determination that Rome must have no consideration shown to her. Her decrees must be abolished, her slaves have no power to smite.

A great crisis is impending. Till its consummation arrive things will go from bad to worse. The spread of Popery, under the refined name of Ritualism in Great Britain, and its vast increase in America, proclaims a mighty struggle to be in reserve. We are not of those who think the active battle will be fought only by Zion's children. No: the time is coming when men of the world will have to fight for their liberties such as a priestly caste would never tolerate. In the Reformation of the 13th and 15th centuries, though men of God led the van, the majority who took part in the overthrow of Rome's *body politic*, were men of the world, but men sickened with its farce and oppression. So we believe it will yet be. The Lamb, and His called and chosen and faithful followers, will contend on Divine grounds and for the honour of His Father and His own name, but multitudes who see only worldly advantage accruing from Protestant principles will unite, by legislative means and perhaps force of arms, to destroy the vast pretensions of "the Man of sin and Son of perdition," and thus will peace and prosperity be shared by lands like Ireland.

Societies like the Fenian, the Ribbon, the Moonlight, &c., whose atrocities are exhibited after the manner of the infamous butchery in Phoenix Park, will all hasten on the eventual accomplishment of God's exhibition and destruction of Antichrist: of whom it is written: "In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." Rev. xviii. 24. The *spirit* of the Apostate Church from the time of her arising is thus identified with all the bloodshed nationally prevalent: for it is a question whether Rome, through her countless confessors in the courts of Kings and Councils of Republics, has not had a hand in all the wars that have arisen since her day.

But "strong is the Lord God that judgeth her." And He will not lack the means in His appointed time for her utter irremediable overthrow. He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light

dwelleth with Him. There is no counsel or device against Him; for His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. But when we read of the lamentations of kings and merchants of the earth over Rome's fall, it makes one almost tremble at the foreshadowing of vast revolutionary elements being brought into motion which, like the convulsions of an earthquake, shall cast mystical Babylon's earthly power and splendour like a millstone into the sea, while its *spirit* shall ultimately be consumed by the Spirit of the Redeemer's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His coming. And Ireland shall share in the deliverance or punishment. Blood has long been crying for vengeance. It is crying still, and shall be answered by Him Who saith, "Vengeance is Mine: I will repay, saith the Lord."

THE EDITOR.

## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

God ministers not the Spirit by the works of the law. The law of faith and the Spirit always go together; "After ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." We are under the law of *faith* to Christ; and God ministers the Spirit by the hearing of faith. Nor is the law the strength of grace, but the strength of sin; for, "The strength of sin is the law." The rod of the Lord's strength is His gospel, which is "the power of God into salvation to everyone that believeth."

HUNTINGTON.

God hath several ways wherewith to exercise his people. Divers miseries come one on the neck of another, as the lunatic in the gospel 'fell sometimes in the water, sometimes in the fire;' so God changeth the dispensation, sometimes in this trouble, sometimes in that. Paul gives a catalogue of his dangers and sufferings: 2 Cor: xi. 24-28, 'In perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the city, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren!' Crosses seldom come single. When God beginneth once to try, He useth divers ways of trial; and indeed there is great reason. Divers diseases must have divers remedies. Pride, envy, covetousness, worldliness, wantonness, ambition, are not all cured by the same physic. Such an affliction pricks the bladder of pride, another checks our desires, that are apt to run out in the way of the world, &c. Do not murmur, then, if miseries come upon you, like waves in a continual succession. Job's messengers came thick and close one after another, to tell of oxen, and house, and camels, and sons, and daughters, and all destroyed, Job i. Messenger upon messenger, and still with a sadder story. We have 'divers lusts,' Titus iii. 3, and, therefore, have need of 'divers trials.' MANTON.

## ESSAYS ON HART'S HYMNS.—LV.

## HYMN 51.

*"And when they had nothing to pay He frankly forgave them both."*

—Luke vii. 42.

**T**HE ordeal through which every vessel of mercy passes in order to "glorify God for His mercy" is, in every instance, more or less painful and distracting. Whether the heat of the furnace to which the Lord submits His precious metal be ordinary, or seven times hotter than usual, it is always sufficient to discover the dross of human nature, and to prove the heart of the most morally-disposed to be "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." The Fall of man has not only depraved, but blinded and cauterized him. Could he see and feel what he is in his native condition, he would not continue to flatter himself in his own eyes until, by some open manifestation of wickedness, "his iniquity is found to be hateful." Ps. xxxvi. 2. Nor will the Lord permit this in Zion: for heart-work, the fruit of the Holy Spirit's gracious indwelling, shall stop the mouth from boasting in all cases, and bring in each soul guilty before God. And then how true—

"Mercy is welcome news indeed  
To those that guilty stand;  
Wretches that feel what help they need,  
Will bless the helping hand!" Ver. 1.

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country," Prov. xxv. 25. And such is the news of "mercy." Flowing from the river of everlasting love, it is one of those streams which make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High, Psa. xlvi. 4. Ezekiel appears to refer to its manifestation through the mediation of the Lord Jesus, when he describes the waters of the sanctuary as issuing from under the threshold of the house, and at the south side of the altar, chap. xlvii. 1. Comparatively unseen, until God was manifested in the flesh, were the extensive purposes of mercy, especially as they related to the Gentile elect, and until from the altar of Christ's sacrifice, the abounding of grace was revealed. Eph. iii. 5, 6. Then the riches of Jehovah's mercy became apparent: and the good news was proclaimed by Apostles and their successors—every sent



ambassador for Christ, however humble, to the comforting of those who needed it: for only those

“Wretches that feel what help they need  
Will bless the helping hand.”

A Peter sinking in the waters, and a Pharisee on the dry land of self-security, are not likely to equally appreciate the outstretched arm of an almighty Jesus. Souls at ease in Zion, and they who know the plague of their own hearts, can never hear with the same sensations the good news of Sovereign mercy. *Morally*, none will dispute the fact, that

“Who rightly would his alms dispose  
Must give them to the poor;  
None but the wounded patient knows  
The blessings of his cure.” Ver. 2.

But *spiritually*, how great the opposition to this consistent statement. The “*alms*” of Divine favour must be given to the Christ-despising moralist; the “*cure*” to those who never felt the wound produced by the arrow of conviction. So frothy professors contend; *i.e.*, such as recognize “*Mercy*” as at all needful: while many of their number rather regard the heavenly boon in the light of a debt due to those who are *workers for Jesus*. This is a striking feature in the profession of our day. The grand old truth—“To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness”—never was held in more general contempt than it is now. To win the crown of everlasting life, man must be a *co-worker with God*. The Holy Spirit’s work is nothing more than a *general influence operating upon all*, of which all must avail themselves, and work out their own salvation. The free-will of man must decide the matter of salvation, or Jesus Christ will have died in vain. Such is the general teaching.

This Babel structure thus is rising day by day, higher and higher, while Zion prostrate in the dust is scorned and derided of her enemies. But the truth abides:

“We all have sinned against our God,  
Exception none can boast.”

The only “*exception*” consists in the *knowledge* of the fact. In mount Zion the face of the covering and the vail spread over all nations is destroyed; on the rest it remains. “By the law is the *knowledge* of sin;” and this knowledge comes by Divine teaching and discipline, and all Zion’s sons and daughters experience this in

their respective measure. They all therefore feel they need salvation. Each one is concerned to possess the enjoyment of pardoning mercy ;

“ But he that feels the heaviest load  
Will prize forgiveness most.” Ver. 3.

The greater the pressure on the heart and conscience, the greater the anxiety to “ taste that the Lord is gracious.” When convictions are very gentle ; when temptations are not distressing ; when the providential pathway is not rough, grace may be in the heart, but its inward working is seldom strong, and its outward manifestations seldom very distinctive. Through fire and through water, the wealthy place—the fulness of Christ—is reached. In trouble the Lord is visited as at no other time, and the prayer is poured out, with importunity unknown at other times, when His chastening is upon the soul, Isa. xxvi. 16, 17. Hence it follows that, the deliverance of the most heavily-burdened is usually the clearest and most complete, so far as the realization of an interest in the atonement of the Lord Jesus and the electing love of the Father ; while the remembrance of the past often serves to abase the soul in admiration at the unmerited goodness of God. And so it is written : “ That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God,” Ezek. xvi. 63.

But however deep the sensations of conviction, and knowledge of the broken-up fountains of the great deep within may be, “ who can understand his errors ?” Psa. xix. 12.

“ No reckoning can we rightly keep ;  
For who the sums can know ?  
Some souls are fifty pieces deep,  
And some five hundred owe !” Ver. 4.

Though each one partakes in heart and nature equally in the original transgression of Adam, great is the difference in practical guilt. And though *heart-sins*, set in the light of the Lord’s countenance, are quite sufficient to sink into the depths of despair, yet, it is evident from innumerable instances that, gross *outward sins* leave the deepest impression on the guilt-stricken conscience, and appear to call loudest on the justice of God for the execution of vengeance. And when *evil thoughts* are brought into the dire account, and accumulated days and years stored with these seeds of iniquity are pondered by the Lord’s people, how can they *keep a reckoning* ? How can they *know the sums*. Admitting the words in their highest sense to be

those of the sinless Surety, in a subordinate and truly personal sense they become the language of all quickened souls: "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me," Psa. xl. 12. Whether it be fifty or five hundred pieces, if the debtor has no assets to set against the debt, he is equally helpless and hopeless. So with all God's children. They are reduced to bankruptcy in every case. They can face neither law nor justice on natural grounds. Their only hope must rest upon the sovereign clemency of the Heavenly Creditor. If His bowels of compassion fail them, they must sink in despair, and perish.

It is now the riches of the glory of the Father's grace, in His kindness towards His chosen in Christ Jesus, begins to be exhibited in the gospel. The Holy Spirit reveals Him Who was Surety for the stranger, and Who smarted for it. The beloved Redeemer swore to His own hurt to discharge the obligation incurred by His members, and changed not. He paid the price in precious blood, and perfect righteousness, and holds the cancelled bonds in readiness to display before the wondering eyes of His redeemed, when the set time to favour them as prisoners of hope arrives. That set time is when they give up all for lost; when it is with them, like as it was with the Egyptians before Joseph, in the days of famine, who said, "We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands." Aye: but the lands must go too; and then they shall have seed for their food. Then comes the acknowledgment: "Thou hast saved our lives; let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants," Gen. xlvii. 18-25. In accordance with this, and the sweet tenor of our Lord's parable of the two debtors, Mr. Hart beautifully writes:—

"But be our debts whate'er they may,  
However great or small,  
As soon as we have nought to pay,  
Our Lord forgives us all.

'Tis perfect poverty alone  
That sets the soul at large;  
While we can call one mite our own  
We have no full discharge." Vers. 5-6.

Most important is the instruction conveyed in the commentary on our Lord's words, as found in the last verse. The "*perfect poverty*"

associated with the *soul's enlargement* ; the possession of "*one mite*" forming an insuperable barrier to its "*full discharge*." Let all seekers of Jesus crucified, note this well. Those painfully trying sensations which are inseparable from this "*perfect poverty*" are absolutely necessary, that Christ may be exalted in the free gift of pardon and justification. Even as the man was born blind, "that the works of God might be made manifest in him," John ix. 3 ; and as Lazarus must sicken and die "for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby," chap. xi. 4 ; so in the reducing of the souls of His people to that extreme penury that they have "nothing to pay" to their God for anything, spiritual or temporal, there is this great end in view,—to bring them to feel the bliss arising from the declaration, "I WILL LOVE THEM FREELY," Hosea xiv. 4. Then the prison doors fly open, and the gracious Redeemer appears in all His loveliness as the Deliverer of the poor when he crieth ; of the needy also, and of him that hath no helper. Then is the prayer answered : "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name," Psa. cxlii. 7 : for all the praise is now ascribed to sovereign mercy and tender compassion.

But "*one mite*" held in reserve ; any duty, frame, feeling, consistent act, or legal spirit, indulged and depended on as necessary to the obtaining a smile or token for good from the Lord, will bar the way to the fulness of the blessing. The Lord, in condescension to His children's infirmities, will not, it is true, deal with them wholly as bond-slaves. The bowels of mercies which ever sound within Him toward them, will not suffer Him to turn away from doing them good. But He will bring down their heart with labour ; He will weaken their strength in the way ; He will cause them, like the poor woman with the issue of blood, to spend all they have upon "physicians of no value ;" He will make them totally insolvent, so that the cry shall no more come forth from their lips, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all ;" but, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And then He will appear to their joy, and in the total remission of all sin, by the application of the atoning blood of Jesus, will command their release ; knock off their fetters, and bid them with broken hearts to "go in peace."

This is the "*full discharge*" to which the apostle so beautifully and boldly refers to : "If God be for us, who can be against us ? He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,

how shall He not with Him also freely given us all things. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii. 31-34. Thus out of prison the soul comes to reign with its Eternal Lover and Ransomer. In Christ it realizes itself beloved, chosen, complete, and accepted, and all the return it can ever make is, to love Him with His Own love, and place the crown upon His head, saying, "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." MERCY now reigns triumphant.

THE EDITOR.

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### THE POWER OF GRACE.

[The following letter is one of the series written by the young man whose conversion and death were recorded in our last under the above title.]

December 25th, 1842.

Dear Caroline,—According as my brother has before told me your request, and again reminding me, I have now set down to write to one, as I am informed, who was "a stranger and foreigner," but now "a fellow citizen with the saints and of the household of God." I have been looking, as it were, for somebody out of our circle, that they might write to me, so that I could answer their letter. So if you are fond of your pen, please to return. But what have I to write about? I suppose you say, "of things touching the King." Well, my heart is inditing a good matter, and out of the abundance of my heart my pen writes. First, then, I must take the liberty to inform you it is Christmas day,—my spiritual birthday,—a day much to be observed to the Lord, for bringing me out of Egyptian darkness into the marvellous light of the Son of God—my dear Jesus,—and to follow after His reapers; and truly I can say, that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life; and shall I trust in God and be confounded? No, but hope still in God, Who hath brought me to the fold that the Lord hath blessed. You know what I mean; and do you know my God is such a bountiful God too, that He orders His reapers to let fall a few handfuls of corn for the purpose, so that the poor gleaner is become like Naphtali, "satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." And as to the possessions, I am told they are so immense that eye hath not seen, ears have not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart to conceive it; and, to tell the truth, in my own mind I often think that instead of these beautiful possessions, hell is my portion, and

my lot. For like the Israelites, I sing the praises to my God for His manifold blessings, but yet I so soon forget His wonderful works. Truly I can say, "O, the long suffering of my God!" but though many are the temptations, troubles, darkness, and all the horrible thoughts and workings of this wicked heart, yet the Lord in His own time delivereth me, and giveth me a hope still to cleave to Him. I thank God, I can say that the grace of God is above all these things; and I have at times come off a conqueror through Him that was made perfect through sufferings.

Dear Caroline, I have cause to bless God to all eternity, and to marvel greatly at the goodness of God in the glorious and wonderful way He brings His people to His blessed fold. God will work; and who dares to hinder? "I will do all My pleasure," saith the Lord. O sing unto the Lord, for He is my rock and fortress, and my deliverer. I will sing of salvation entirely free and complete, through the blood of the Lamb:—

"Dearly we're bought, highly esteemed;  
Redeemed, with Jesus' blood redeemed."

What wonderful condescension of our blessed Christ, to highly esteem such poor helpless, needy, self-empty, sin-perplexed, law-condemned sinners! but it is only such that need the good Physician's care. But why, dear Lord, dost Thou manifest Thyself to us and not unto the world at large? The Holy Ghost answers the question: I have loved you because I would love you; and "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy." Whom I will I harden, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. So you see, dear Caroline, that it was all for love. Have you a real interest in this matchless and eternal love? If you have, I can congratulate you, as one who is led to see yourself a sinner saved in the purpose of Jehovah from all eternity; and it was everlasting love that decreed thy salvation. Chosen by God, "elect according to the fore-knowledge of God," preserved by our precious Christ, Who is all in all in our salvation; and quickened by the Holy Spirit. Thus a threefold cord cannot easily be broken. O what a blessed thing it is for a poor guilty, hell-deserving sinner, that a precious Christ should undertake the work of our redemption, become our surety,—and so finished transgression, made an end of sin, brought in everlasting righteousness, and sealed our pardon with His blood. There is comfort for the comfortless, hope for the hopeless, salvation for the lost, and they that know it and feel it too, will sing a blessed song of praise when they are melted down at the goodness of the Lord; and their song will be "Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain, Who hath redeemed us unto God by His blood; to Him be glory and dominion, both now and for ever."

Dear Caroline, were we always to be thus exulting under the sensible comforts of the Holy Spirit, how little should we know of our own deceitful wicked hearts; how liable should we be to be puffed up with "spiritual pride, that rampant beast," and fancy ourselves the cheerful favourites of heaven. The heart of man, what is it like? some are afraid to tell; but I am not, therefore I say, it is like a little hell. In the times of darkness and desertion, then, even then, we ransack our heart, and find it indeed a foul sink of iniquity—a Babylon of unclean birds and spirits. I find it so, and, if I speak for the rest, they find it so too. "Behold, Lord, I am vile! I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Dear Lord, I am quite unable to do anything of myself, all my sufficiency is of a covenant God, and when deserted, as it were but for a season only, by Him Whom my soul loveth, like Asaph I cry out, "Is His mercy clean gone for ever?" But it is only to try our faith and patience, to receive blessings with greater thankfulness. I might just as well try to move a mountain, or create a world, as kindle the least spark of divine love in my hard, dull, dead, and cold heart, till Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, arise with healing in His wings. Here, dear Caroline, I must conclude, for I have tried your patience long ago. May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. What poor creatures we are: yea, our breath is in our nostrils, and we know not how soon it will be, when we shall sin and sigh no more. May the presence of the Lord be with you, and may the Holy Spirit give you peace—even that peace which passeth all understanding. Now unto *Him* that loved us, giving every pledge that love could give, freely shed His blood to save us, gave His life that we might live, be the kingdom and dominion, and the glory, ever more.

Your brother in the Lord,

JOSEPH PORTER.

P.S.—This letter was written to Miss C. Seales, who afterwards became my beloved partner in life, but long since has entered into her eternal rest, to be for ever with her loving Lord. SAM. PORTER.

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How rare that toil a prosperous issue finds,  
Which seeks to reconcile divided minds;  
A thousand scruples rise at passion's touch;  
This yields too little, and that asks too much;  
Each wishes each with other's eyes to see,  
And many sinners can't make two to agree.  
What mediation then the Saviour show'd  
Who singly reconciled his church to God!

DR. JOHN OWEN.

### "THE LAME TAKE THE PREY."

**B**UT certainly not by their own power and might. If it were only "of him that willeth and of him that runneth," these poor ready-to-halt creatures would fare but badly. In the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ it is the weak one who is to say, "I am strong:" for "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." Isa. xl. 29. By mortal strength "shall no man prevail." The Lord "delighteth not in the strength of the horse; He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy." Psa. cxlvii. 10, 11. And these are the lame ones.

Lameness is generally occasioned by one of three causes: (1), either it is from the birth; or (2), it is the result of after disease; or (3), it proceeds from some special accident, as an explosion, a blow, a fall, &c. That which is from the birth may either arise from hereditary disease or malformation. The man at the beautiful gate of the temple was "lame from his mother's womb," Acts iii. 2. Beloved Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, who when David became king sat at meat at his table, was "lame in his feet," from the age of five years, and that by reason of a fall, being dropped by his nurse, when she fled with him from apprehended danger. 2 Sam. iv. 4.

The spiritual lameness of those who are ordained to "take the prey," is, in a metaphysical sense, connected with all three of the above-named causes; as by the teaching of the blessed Spirit they all discover and acknowledge. Being shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, to their naturally corrupt birth they trace the condition in which they find their hearts and minds, in their utter alienation from the holiness of Jehovah and the purity of His law. The sore pain and weakness suffered by those who experience their lameness in the ways and things of God, make "the whole head sick, and the whole heart faint." With Paul they cry, as they fail in all their efforts to clime the heavenly ladder by natural efforts: "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do I." Rom. vii. 19. A broken tooth and a foot out of joint are equally unreliable when put to the test: and as "the legs of the lame are not equal," Prov. xxvi. 7, so they find uncertainty associated with all their attempted movements in the ways of righteousness. And this is a birth-calamity, and a life-long trial.

But it is also traceable to a FALL—a FALL unparalleled in the magnitude of its effects. Adam by his one fatal act of disobedience maimed himself and all his posterity. And it is a mercy to be sensible of it, and to be brought to attend to the admonition:



“Vaunt thy native strength no longer :  
Vain's the boast ; all is lost ;  
Sin and death are stronger.”

Moreover there are many incidents which befall a believer in passing through this world which occasion lameness. To say nothing of the outward indulgence of sin, which, in the case of David, made him go halting all his days, the secret plague and power of it often deprive the soul of all its vigour for a season ; nor do temptations, worldly cares, and the many and varied occupations of life fail to serve to the same end. But it is an unspeakable mercy when, notwithstanding all the combined causes of the lameness which affects all the people of God at certain seasons, straight paths are made for the feet, so that that which is lame is not “turned out of the way,” Heb. xii. 13. Under the law he was cursed who laid a stumbling-block before the blind, Lev. xix. 14, and the Lord was not less careful of the lame. And under the Gospel dispensation woe to him who, as a preacher or teacher, turns aside from the truth of the Gospel, and the simplicity which is in Christ, those who are

“Bruised and mangled by the fall,”

for whatever their incapacity, the Lord of pilgrims, Who hears the cry of the poor and the sighing of the needy, becomes the maintainer of their cause.

Mephibosheth's partial plea of lameness for not accompanying David in his temporary flight, did not serve to wholly counteract Ziba's previous report, and to prevent the loss of portion of his land, 2 Sam. xix. 24-30. But it shall not fare so with the Lord's lame children : for with Him “the lame take the prey.” And this is when “the prey of a great spoil” is “divided” by the glorious Captain of our salvation, Isaiah xxxiii. 23. In the fruits of His illustrious conquests all His people share—the weak as well as the strong. As David “made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel” that, “as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff : they shall part alike,” 1 Sam. xxx. 24. 25 ; so it remains established in Zion “unto this day.” And as “the lame” only “take” what their gracious Lord gives them, we read : “He hath given meat (literally, ‘prey’) to them that fear Him ;” Psalm cxi. 5. The work of hunting down, and slaying and spoiling all our spiritual adversaries, was that of Christ. And all that He did and suffered becomes spiritual “prey” ; and the “lame” take it.

It is thus the Gospel is so rich in its provisions for the poor despised incapables and for-life incurables “in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.” Their infirmity shall not be their destruction ; their lameness their starvation. Their bounteous

Redeemer compassionates their weakness and insufficiency, and while salvation is declared to be "of God that sheweth mercy, they are secure of receiving and partaking of what the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus has obtained for them.

AQUILA.

### CHRISTIAN REFLECTIONS.

Beloved of my God ere I fell  
In Adam, the first of my race,  
Redeemèd from curse, and from hell,  
And made a partaker of grace.

In my Saviour's obedience clad,  
And washed from my sins in His blood,  
With joy I shall lift up my head,  
And stand in the presence of God.

And there, with ten thousands of saints,  
Made white in the blood of the Lamb,  
To Him Who redeemed me from death,  
Salvation and honour proclaim.

No more to be harass'd by sin,  
To sigh and to sorrow no more—  
For ever with Jesus shut in,  
His glories in bliss to explore.

A. G.

### "SAVED BY HOPE."

Wadhurst, October 7th, 1880.

My dear Friend,—



THANK you for your kind little note; and "if the Lord will," I will be with you on the day named. I told you in my last brief note that I had much I could write to you about if time allowed; but then when one has time the matter seems to be missing, or, in the interval,

"The tempter sly  
Affirms it fancied, forged or vain."

Yet I know it is impossible for me to create what I experienced in June, July, or August: and, believing it was of the Lord, I'd gladly have the same repeated. Real humility of soul is as much of the Lord's creating as the sun that shines above our heads. It first arose in this way:—I was reading at the breakfast table Prov. vi., and was powerfully arrested with verse 3, "Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy Friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy Friend." I soon sought to be alone, and, feeling the powerful application of the text, begged to be taught its meaning, when the words "My son" seemed anew to revive and declare my sonship. "Deliver thyself." I asked, "How can I?" When thou art come into the hand of thy Friend. Oh, how in a moment I saw that I was in His hand; I saw that men were His sword; but the hand was His. Oh, how I tried to discover what lay behind it. I had been striving with the rod; seeing only the hands of men. But oh, when I saw that it was His hand, how passively I could lay myself at His dear feet. While I

saw only men's hands, I kicked and fought; but when I discovered that it was His hand, I was in a moment as submissive as a babe. When I saw only the hand of men, I was full of self-pity; when I saw that it was His hand, I was filled with self-loathing. "Humble thyself." Never will or can the soul do this: but when the Lord the Holy Spirit takes the work up, then the soul can and does humble itself in the lowest dust; and so in my case. Oh, how He opened up to my view my vileness, baseness, and depravity. How I wondered that He had borne with me. How clearly I saw light in His light. His Word was quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and was a discerner of the thoughts and intents of hearts. Oh, I cannot tell you what deep self-abasement I felt for days and weeks.

Could I now complain of the treatment of men? No; but felt a wish to show them some permanent act of affectionate friendship. I was thus dumb before Him. "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it," Psalms xxxix. 9. "Humble thyself." Oh, yes; I could then, in sackcloth and ashes. It is impossible for me to relate how the word cut, tried, and searched me; and what union of fellowship I had with Jacob in, "I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies." How I was lost in wonder at Isaiah's language (chap vi. 5). Like him I heard the seraphim cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy;" and like Him, "the posts of the door moved at the voice of Him that cried." "Then, said I—ah 'tis only then, when the holiness and majesty of the Lord is seen—"Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for (mark) mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." "What!" I cried, "is Isaiah here? was this the language of this great Prophet? Can it be that the Lord's eminent Isaiah should have thus to speak?" Oh, with what brotherly affection did I embrace the dear prodigal,—"**Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in Thy sight; and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.**" How struck I was with this sweet fact, that no sooner was Isaiah brought to this point, than one of the bright seraphims flew to his side; and the Father ran to His humble son. This bore me up greatly, and I felt that I had no hand in this business. Dan. ix. was also very sweet. His humble confession of his sins and the sins of his fathers suited me well, and fitted my very soul. Job's confession, too, seemed peculiarly adapted to my experience, "**Behold, I am vile!**" Like me, He had for years been vindicating Himself, declaring His innocence and the cleanness of his hands; but, when the Lord took the case in hand, then he cried "**Wherefore I repent, and abhor myself in dust and**

Now, but for a secret support, I must have sunk under this ; but "so shalt thou prevail with thy Friend," and twenty such like passages, were encouragement to faith and prayer. A sinner in idea, only needs a Saviour in idea. But those complaints ; those deep confessions ; this inward self-loathing, are not mere modes of speech, but infelt realities. Those deep inward exercises made room indeed for the Lord Jesus, and gave me anew to prize His complete and finished work. Another thing, too, kept springing up ; and that was a spirit of gratitude. I cannot tell my friend how grateful I felt for a piece of bread. How I thanked Him for the roof above my head ; and then how sweet were the words "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High ;" and, "Call unto Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." This for some days was like an "apple of gold in a picture of silver ;" for I could say, "Lord, Thou knowest the inmost secrets of all hearts ; that I do offer Thee thanksgiving ; and I do call upon Thee in this day of trouble, and Thou hast said, 'I will deliver thee.' Oh, be as good as Thy word." Again and again, I thought He would soon arise and help me ; but no sooner does He withdraw His influence than I am just as before—lumpish, cold, and dead. One thing I would gratefully remember : that is, during years of trial I have been upheld in physical strength. An event occurred early in the year that nearly killed me. I said, "I shall not survive this." I was prostrated with sorrow, and could only eat or drink as forced by a sense of duty to do so ; but thus far His hand hath held me up. Oh may I yet live to speak His worth and commend Him to His dear tried and sorrow-smitten ones. I am certain that mere letter Calvinism is of no use to God's saints in the furnace of affliction : and I am also sure that a minister at ease in Zion is only acceptable to those who are settled on their lees. We read of "the *sure* mercies of David ;" but not of the "swift mercies :—" they are swift when the time comes. When "the King's business requires haste," then "He will ride on a cherub and fly ; yea, He will fly on the wings of the wind." Our time is always ready.

I hope you are all well, and that your crops are well got in ; and that they will fetch remunerative prices. Godly farmers have had much to try them of late. But, "say ye to the righteous, It shall be well with him." I wonder if you can use the confiding language of the Prophet Habakkuk, 3rd chapter, last three or four verses ? If you can, you are a sweetly-favoured man, indeed. But this you and I both must learn, that our faith stands only in the power of God. Excuse the length, and believe me to be ever,

Yours affectionately,


Mr. Newnham, Waldron.

W. WINSLOW.

## GOD'S WAYS WITH MAN FROM THE BEGINNING.

THE LORD'S COMING AND CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS.

PSALM xxv. 14; PROVERBS xxv. 2.

ROM the word of God we learn, that man, after the flesh, failed in every position in which it pleased God to place him. He at once fell under the power of Satan, lawlessness increased, sins multiplied, and no Seed of the woman arose to crush the subtle foe, who had brought in the ruin. On the contrary, man filled the earth with "corruption and violence," and become so bad that "God repented He had made him" (Gen. v. 16), and destroyed the world that then was with a flood. Again: brought out fresh from the ark to possess the purged earth, he soon failed in his government, and went on from bad to worse, till God at length confounded his plans of self-aggrandizement at Babel. In process of time God called him out as a separate nation, and entrusted him with His law; but here he failed as signally as before, breaking the commandments ere ever (in their written form) they had reached the camp. Thus tried as a nation, which should have executed God's judgments; and tried again under sovereigns, who should have been the dispensers of God's righteousness, we have over and over again the same sad and dreary tale of failure, rebellion, and ruin. Indeed, the favoured nation proved as bad as the heathen by whom it was surrounded, and not only "learned their works," but the descendants of David were themselves the corrupters, instead of the righteous governors of the people.

The first man, therefore, had indeed been proved, and that to the utmost as to his powers and ability to carry out God's governmental commands; and we find that, even in the promised line, the seed of Abraham and of David failed as disastrously as all the others. Now, it had been fully demonstrated, that man in the flesh—whether in the line of promise, or out of it—could not fulfil God's designs, or bring in God's promises of purposed blessings to the earth; he was therefore finally set aside, and the manifestation of the scheme of God's earthly government postponed, until the Second Man, the Last Adam, the Lord from heaven, should come. The One who gathers in His own Sacred Person all the promises, and all the purposed blessings in heaven above, as well as the earth beneath: Who alone is worthy, as well as able, to administer God's righteous government in all its varieties and glorious fulness, in all parts of His dominions. All this we have faithfully recorded in God's infallible Word. First, how the chosen nation was divided. Then how the larger portion—that is, ten out of the twelve tribes—was carried into captivity, from which they have never returned. Lastly, how that the two remaining tribes, with the royal line of David, were taken prisoners to Babylon, some two hundred years later.

Then we learn that, so far as earthly government is concerned, the Jews were at once given up until the Second Man was brought in, and, with this long abandonment of the Jews, commenced "the times of the Gentiles:"—that is, the period during which the sceptre of earthly dominion is entrusted to the Gentiles instead of Israel. These "times of the Gentiles," began with the kingdom of Babylon—the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Then we have the kingdom of the Medes and Persians—symbolized by the breast and arms of silver; and the Greek monarchy, set forth in the belly and thighs of brass; after this, we find "the times of the Gentiles" change their nature, as symbolized by the iron and clay mingled together,—that is to say, the rule is divided among the several kingdoms of various origin, and divers in character, although all connected with the dismembered Roman empire.

But another vision shows us that this is also the last stage, and final shape of the Empire. That is to say, the Roman dominion was to revive in a federal form, under the presidency of one specially energised by Satanic power; and it is when it has reached this phase that judgment will come down upon it,—a "stone cut without hands" falling on the Gentile powers and crushing them to pieces; after which it grows into a mountain, so that it fills the earth, or, as interpreted by Daniel (chap. ii. 44). In the days of these kings [shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people: but it shall break in pieces, and consume all the kingdoms, and it shall stand forever," &c.

So it was, while these "times of the Gentiles" are running their course, that the Jews (that is, the two tribes forming the kingdom of Judah) fulfilled the seventy years of captivity foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. At the close of that period the Babylonian kingdom having been destroyed, and the Persian established on its ruins; the king Cyrus, issued a decree, permitting the Jews of the captivity to return to Jerusalem; in virtue of which, a small band, without political power, or recognised position, found their way back to the ruined city, and soon afterwards built the Temple. Again, after nearly a century, the same Gentile power gave a commandment to "restore and build Jerusalem." Now it is from this latter commandment that Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks dates, which is divided into three parts. First, of seven weeks: second, of sixty-two weeks; third, of one week. During the first part, that of the seven weeks, the city was rebuilt. The second part, that of sixty-two weeks, comprehends the time from the completion of the city to the cutting off of the Messiah. The third part, that of one week, which yet awaits accomplishment, carries "the times of the Gentiles" to a close, "finishes the transgression" of the Jews,

and "brings in everlasting righteousness:" that is, the Desolator being destroyed, and the Messiah's kingdom established on earth, the very place of His humiliation shall bear witness to His glory.

The Jews, as we have seen, had been politically discarded, till "The Messiah should come." Well, in process of time, He did come, heralded by John the Baptist, and the kingdom was proclaimed to the nation with the call to repentance. But man in the flesh proved himself no less incompetent to repent and turn to God and receive His Messiah, and so obtain blessings through Him, than he had before shown himself incompetent to carry out any one of God's purposes in his own strength. No, indeed! "God manifest in the flesh" only drew out the bitter enmity of man's heart, and his utter selfishness, and the more fearful display of his desperate opposition to all that is good and holy. For the Jews, instead of receiving Him as their rightful sovereign, crucified Him between two thieves. Now the effect of this rejection was two-fold. The blood they shed was designed, according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," to be the means by which He would not only accomplish eternal redemption for His Church and people, but also righteously reconcile all things to Himself, entirely blot out sin, and thus lay the foundation of all true blessings, as well for the Gentiles as the Jews; the earthly and the heavenly, where there is no distinction; all made one "by the blood." But the immediate effect of the crime, so far as the Jews were concerned, was, that their "house was left" (to them) "desolate" until they should say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And the kingdom, instead of it taking the manifested prophetic shape, in which the Jews should be the head of the nations, assumed—until the time of Israel's repentance—a mysterious, hidden form, connected with Christ in heaven, and in which the Gentiles were the special objects of God's favour, both in providence and grace.

True, the first summons, after Christ's resurrection, was addressed to the Jews, calling on them again to repent, and thus to receive the kingdom in manifested glory; because Christ had prayed for them from the cross, "Father, forgive them," &c. But, on their refusal, the kingdom definitely assumed the mysterious form, the natural branches being broken off, or, out of, the olive tree; and, the wild olive tree—or Gentiles—being grafted in. There was indeed then, as now, and always, "A remnant according to the election of grace." But "blindness in part happened to Israel." They failed to see God's "grace and truth come by Jesus Christ." So the nation, as a whole, was cut off from their former favours, while the Gentiles took for a time the place of pre-eminence in God's dealings.

Yes, just as the political displacement of the Jews brought in the times of the Gentiles," so now (on the national rejection of Christ) the moral and religious make way for "the coming in of the Gentiles." And it was only when this took place that Israel really became, "Lo, ammi,"—not My people,—though they had in it long ceased to be God's centre of government on earth. Still was not until the people, with their rulers, rejected and crucified the Son of God, that God set the nation entirely aside for and bring "the coming in of the Gentiles." That is, while God is calling out a people from the nations to His name, for heavenly glory, God's bestowment of earthly blessings is suspended, respect of the Jews, through the corruption and violence of the nation—culminating in the death of God's dear and all-beloved Son. Or, to speak according to Daniel's prophecy: After the sixty-ninth week, when the Messiah was "cut off," and mercy will not again begin to flow, till after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in, and God once more displays His purpose concerning the whole earth. Meanwhile, the Gentiles are brought to more than the vacant place of privilege, and consequently greater responsibility to God and his neighbour; even as Christianity is superior to "the Jews' religion." But nominal Christianity is hailed as signally as did Judaism under the law (of course the election of grace always holds good in the power as well as in the purpose of God); for the greater part have never accepted Christ even in name; and that portion of the world, called Christendom, which has at any time nominally owned Jesus as Lord, has long become a leavened mass, corrupted to its very core. And the small sprinkling of true believers in its midst have themselves, alas! based entirely to present a testimony, as the "one body," and, sad to say, rent into many conflicting sects and parties, have long lost sight of, and kept in the back-ground, the very leading feature of all the apostles' preaching and teaching, that glorious bond of union, not keeping the heart and eye on the one and only centre, and the blessed hope," even the Lord's return for His saints. And we are all around the sad consequences; Christians have become hardly distinguishable from the world around them. This is, alas, too true, even of God's own dear children, who ought to be "the light of the world:" which is simply impossible so long as their object in life, their pursuits in the world, and the character of their walk, are precisely the same as the world's. Nevertheless God is longsuffering toward (the elect) and not willing that any should perish; it is also most certain that "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise;" for "a little while" "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead (believers) shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living believers) shall be



changed." This is the undated, but nevertheless, ever-present hope of the Church. When the "coming of the Lord" for His saints has happened, Christendom—the remaining branches grafted in the olive tree having failed to remain in the goodness of God, will be cut off. The fulness of the Gentiles having come in, the corrupt mass of professors left behind will be dealt with by God in righteous judgment. Judicial blindness will overtake them; "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; and for this cause," &c. 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

Hereford.

(To be continued.)

H. LAWFORD.

### THE TIME OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD.

Dear Mr. Editor,

HAVING had my attention expressly directed to your article on the Nativity in the February number of your "G.A." it has deeply interested me, as also the extract from Mr. Galloway's work. Though I think he is wrong as to the year of the Nativity, I nearly agree with him as to the time of the year. The year B. C. 1, would bring him into conflict with Roman history and the times mentioned by St. Luke. Having given a good deal of time and study to the subject of Chronology and the Nativity and history of our SURETY and SUBSTITUTE, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, I venture to affirm that all your readers may take St. Luke's historical statements as absolutely correct.

The first historical point of time given by St. Luke is, the decree of Augustus, (ii. 1). There have been various opinions expressed as to the time when this decree was issued, and also as to the extent of the decree, but we must understand "those days" to relate to the time of the birth of John the Baptist; that is rendered necessary by the context. As to the extent of the decree, Dr. Lardner, after a most searching criticism of the whole subject in all its bearings, reads "*the whole land*," instead of "all the world;" and he gives several instances of a similar rendering of the Greek, and understands it to mean the whole land under Herod's jurisdiction. Augustus, having had his mind prejudiced against Herod, issued this decree to tax Herod's subjects, to humble Herod. And Josephus says, that they, the people, took the oath of fidelity to Cæsar and to Herod. With respect to the time when this assessment, or taxing, was made, all learned men seem pretty well agreed that it was about one year, or two years at most, before Herod's death. But there has been a very great diversity of opinion respecting the time of Herod's death: nevertheless, I believe it can be proved, if historical testimony is at all to be relied on, that he

died a little while before the Passover B.C. 2. If this date is accepted, it will harmonise with all the other historical dates mentioned in connection with our Lord's nativity and life upon earth; and it will only be necessary to go one year back for the time of the decree of Augustus, as that will leave sufficient time for all the events to transpire that are narrated to the death of Herod and the Passover that immediately followed.

About the time this decree was executed, Josephus gives an account of a great disturbance in Herod's court, and of his having put many to death on account of their adherence to some things prophesied by a Pharisee, or the Pharisees, about the time of taking the oath. There is one event in connection with this which Dr. Lardner seems to have overlooked, as I am persuaded that if he had laid hold of this fact, it would have enabled him to reconcile the events with more exactness: that is, the prophecy of Zacharias at the circumcision of his son, John Baptist. You will remember this took place nearly six months before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is said, "*and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea.*" Whereas, Dr. Lardner seems to have understood the prophecies of SIMEON and ANNA, when the child Jesus was presented in the temple, as the occasion of the disturbance in Herod's household. That, you will perceive, would make a full six months difference in the time, and according to my opinion, would not harmonise near so well with the events as narrated. Moreover, it is nowhere implied in the narrative, that I am aware of, that our Lord Jesus Christ was born before the enrolment, or assessment, took place. It is simply stated, "*that while they were there, the days were accomplished.*" And as I understand this matter, there was an additional reason, besides the taxing, for delay; that is, the great feast of the seventh month was at hand; when all the males twenty years old and upwards were required by the law of Moses to present themselves before the Lord.

The events said to have occurred after the issuing of the decree for the taxing, are:—Antipater, Herod's eldest son, is said to make a journey to Rome; seven months is the time allowed for that. During this seven months Pheroras, Herod's brother, dies. After his death a conspiracy is discovered criminating Antipater as the chief plotter to take away the life of Herod his father by means of poison. Ambassadors are sent to Rome by Herod to accuse Antipater, and soon after, upon additional evidence of his guilt, another set of ambassadors are sent in haste. In the meantime Antipater had returned, and was arrested and put into prison. The Magi are supposed to arrive from the east, and the slaughter of the infants to take place, though this is not mentioned in Josephus. One Judas

and one Matthias, public teachers, persuaded their scholars to pull down Herod's golden eagle from over the gate of the temple. They were arrested and sent to Jericho, tried and condemned, and were burnt alive, "*and that very night,*" says Josephus, "*there was an eclipse of the moon.*" Another Matthias, the High-Priest, was deposed, and his wife's brother Joazer made High-Priest in his stead. Herod's disease increased upon him so much that, upon the advice of his physicians, he went beyond Jordan to the warm baths at Callirrhoe. He returned again to Jericho, where he conceived one of the most horrid acts of cruelty I have ever read of, to ensure a mourning at his funeral. While giving orders for their murderous action to be carried out, letters came from Rome giving Herod authority to do as he willed with his son Antipater, who was soon after put to death, and Herod himself died five days after. Not long after the funeral ceremonies, the feast of the Passover occurred. According to my calculation the Passover B.C. 2 would occur April 16th, and I am of opinion the eclipse mentioned by Josephus occurred the 19th of January preceding. I have made the calculation of the eclipse by the rules of astronomers, and from catalogued eclipses, and I arrive at the result that, the middle of the eclipse would be about half-past seven o'clock in the evening and would be nearly total. I am aware this calculation is liable to be disputed, but I should like to see it demonstrated.

Supposing that this calculation is correct, the order of events I place as follows: The birth of John Baptist at the latter end of April B.C. 3; the issuing of the decree of Augustus immediately after. I allow two months for the people to prepare to be enrolled, and another two or three months for the enrolment. This would bring the time down to September. I place the birth of Jesus somewhere about the 10th day of the seventh Jewish month (I do not presume to fix the exact day), which would be about the 17th of October, B.C. 3. Then we must allow forty days for the purification, see Luke ii. 22. This would bring us down to the 26th of November, leaving two months nearly for the arrival of the Magi, before the eclipse, and two months more after the eclipse to the Passover B.C. 2, which was the Passover that followed soon after Herod's death. Thus, I place all these important events within less than a year without any crowding, leaving ample time for each to be accomplished in due order.

Passing over the incidental mention of Jesus going up to Jerusalem in his twelfth year, I come now to the fifteenth year of Tiberius, when John Baptist began his ministry. After John had baptized a good many people, it is said, Jesus himself being baptized, received the heavenly acknowledgment of His Sonship—"began to be about

thirty years of age," (iii. 23). The fifteenth year of Tiberius began August 19th, A.D. 28. Supposing this baptism to have occurred the first week in September, Jesus would then be thirty years within about six weeks. After His baptism He was forty days in the wilderness, after which "he returned in the power of the Spirit unto Nazareth," and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and "stood up for to read, and there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias, and when He had opened the book He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; . . . and, TO PREACH THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." "And He began to say unto them, THIS DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED IN YOUR EARS." What do we understand by this "acceptable year of the Lord?" And, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears?" Listen! "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land; unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Lev. xxv. 7-10. May we not understand these words, "*This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears,*" to mean in their fullest extent, that this was indeed the acceptable year; the opening year of the great jubilee of gospel grace? But you will naturally ask, was this indeed a jubilee year? Yes, I believe it was the end of not merely a jubilee year, but of the thirty-third jubilee since Joshua took possession of the promised land. Thirty-three years and a half is almost unanimously agreed to be the length of Christ's life upon earth. How appropriate is this thirty-third jubilee! "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that, through this man (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 38. The law of Moses proclaimed liberty to all the inhabitants of the land to return to his possession and to his family. But here we have a jubilee of freedom from sin and its guiltiness; yea, from all things we are justified by faith in the certain sound of this jubilee trumpet. How glorious this jubilee appears in this light! How it enhances all the ordinances and typical feasts of the Jews, when we understand in what manner they were the shadow of better things to come! And when we understand this great


jubilee of gospel grace is only typical of a still more glorious jubilee, when Jesus will come to be glorified in all His saints—when in the resurrection of the body free from all the fetters of sin and fleshly lusts, pure and holy love will be possessed in its highest fulness: then indeed will be a JUBILEE OF GLORY: “We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

*Leicester.*

JOHN.

P.S. Perhaps it will be as well to explain how this seventh month of the forty-ninth year could be the recommencement of the fiftieth-year. Tisri, which in the text is called the seventh month of the Sabbatic year, is the first month of the civil year, so that half of the civil year is past when the ecclesiastic year begins.

### THOUGHTS ON MALACHI III. 16, 17, 18 VERSES.

 IN this verse of Holy Writ we have an example set before us of the Christian. Here, it does not mean one who professes, and calls himself a Christian, for his state to-day is much the same as it was a year ago. They of Israel who feared the Lord, do most assuredly allude to the true Christian. He knowing himself to be at peace with God, walking humbly and closely with his God, delighteth in doing good, oftentimes acquainting others with the sweet name of Jesus, of His abounding love, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

It passeth knowledge that dear love of Thine,  
My Jesus, Saviour; yet this soul of mine  
Would of Thy love, in all its breadth and length,  
Its height, and depth, its everlasting strength,  
Know more and more.

Those believing ones “spake often one to another.” They had faith in Him, and desired to learn more of Him. We see plainly the Lord heard them. He was listening, while they were talking. Yes, the Holy One of Israel said, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in the midst of them.” Matt. xviii. 20. Paul says, he is not ashamed to speak of Christ, for His Gospel “is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Rom. i. 16. Happy are we who can join with Paul. But alas, how very often Christ is denied even amongst us.

Communicating one with another, and conversing with the best of friends, yet still we linger and hesitate to speak of Him, “the Omniscient, Omnipresent Saviour,” Whose habitation is in the heavens. This shows perfectly well the need of faith,—faith only, to be strengthened by Jesus. Let one and all ask for this blessing. In Matthew, 10th chapter 32nd and 33rd verses, we read what our

Saviour Christ says of denial: If we deny Him, He will also deny us; then for us there will be no admittance through the gates of Heaven. Let us carry into effect verse 32; to confess Christ, and He will confess us. "And a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord." In Revelation, 20th chapter 12th verse, we have recorded the Book of Life, out of which all nations of the earth shall be judged in that great and terrible day of the Lord. The two last verses are in reference to the judgment; when God shall come to make up His jewels: "They shall be Mine," saith the Redeemer, "and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." So that to love, serve and fear God here, will be to us everlasting happiness hereafter; for

Who would not be where Jesus is,  
And serve Him without fear?

The last verse refers to God's Israel returning and discerning between the righteous and the wicked. In Matthew, 25th chap. and 32nd v., we are told that God shall separate them. The righteous shall He seat on His right hand, and the wicked on His left hand. Then shall He say to those who have loved and served Him faithfully, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom of Heaven prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then, will He also say to those on His left hand, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25th chapter 34th and 41st verses. It is certain if we trust in Jesus we need not fear the day of His coming. For those who do not yet know Jesus as their Saviour, I would entreat that they may be led to take heed to the last warning: "Depart from Me," and "Flee from the wrath to come," and to seek Him, the only Saviour, Who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

26, Senior-street, Harrow-road, W.  
London.

E. BOVINGTON.

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### THE LORD'S DAY.

The Lord's holy day—the sacred memento of the risen Saviour's triumph over death, how grandly and calmly does it stand out in all its distinctiveness from Romish and pagan devices! Well is it said by George Herbert,

"O day, most calm, most bright!  
The fruit of this, the next world's bud;  
The world were dark but for Thy light:  
Thy torch doth show the way."

Specially is this day honoured by its Appointer. The work of the Spirit by means of the preached gospel has doubtless been wrought more upon it than upon any other day. Witness the day of Pentecost. And how often has the sacred rest associated with the name of

Sabbath been, by the power of the Holy Comforter, realized in His glorifying of the Lord Jesus in His people's hearts on this day. "His rest shall be glorious!" It is so. Have we not felt it, beloved readers? Not indeed limited to the first day of the week. No; blessed be our covenant God, He has many other holy days. Every time He visits, speaks to, and smiles upon us, it is a hallowed season—a holy day. Jesus is our Sabbath. And "we which have believed do enter into rest"—a rest that calms the troubled heart, and brings full vigour to the desponding mind, and even imparts strength to the weakly and prostrated body. For, in a thousand ways, He is "the health of our countenance" Who is "our God."

No reaction follows the occupation which these holy days of heaven bring to the believer, while the worldling is nearly always the worse after his holidays. We go in the strength of the meal brought by each gracious manifestation of sovereign love, and "the joy of the Lord" becomes our "strength" for future toils and trials. For God in Christ Jesus has sanctified all His holy days, and blessed them to His people for ever; the earnest of which He has given in the Sabbath of the Resurrection, and the bestowment of His Holy Spirit.

JOSIAH.

#### GOSPEL CONFIRMATION.

121, High Street, Gosport,  
May 15th, 1880.

To Mr. Geo. Oakshott and Mrs. Green,

My dear aged friends and fellow pilgrims to the inhabited city prepared of God for a prepared people, grace and peace be multiplied.

I wish you what I pray for on my own behalf, that you may grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of that same Redeemer Who became poor, though He was rich in everything—being the rightful possessor of Heaven and earth, that we poor worms, who had nothing but sin, might be rich through His poverty; putting us into possession of durable riches and righteousness. And astonishing as it is, yet is it true, for blessed Paul says: "For all things are yours," whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." And again: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." What are bank notes, gold, or jewels, compared with these things, to which add an "eternal weight of glory?" Dear Lord, give us more precious faith, that we may "comprehend (or apprehend) with all saints what is the *breadth*, and *length*, and *depth*, and *height*, and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

It is the promised Comforter Who testifies of these things, giving us to know and feel their Divine reality ; and it is our privilege to pray for this blessed Teacher, that He would condescend to come and show us these things, as expressed in the 8th verse of the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians ; the Lord help us "to sink on these things."

And now that our sand is almost run through, and our days on earth are drawing to a close, we want confirming,—not by a bishop on earth, but by our Lord Himself. Good Joseph Hart says :—

"He is the Son to free ;  
The Bishop He to bless ;  
The full propitiation He ;  
The Lord our righteousness."

Tell then, dear friends, let us try to comfort one another with these words. And, as we do not often meet face to face, may He Who can bless a word written be pleased to bless our correspondence, and put it into our hearts to pray for each other ; for truly it is a rough much and varied tribulation that we must enter the kingdom ; and we have His own blessed word on our side : "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's *good* pleasure to give you the kingdom." Wishing you an abundant entrance into the same,

I remain your junior brother,

ALFRED HAMMOND.

### N U R T U R E .

Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

'Mid the desolate crags of this sin-riven world,  
Where the tempest is born and thick vapours are curled :  
On the rugged and dreary, and lightning-scathed peak,  
In a terrible eyry, all lonely and bleak,  
Jehovah has chosen to cradle and rear  
His offspring, ordained to a happier sphere.  
But fear not, confessors, stand fast in His name :  
Amid danger, and weakness, temptation and shame  
Ye shall learn to confide in your Saviour above,  
To live in His life, and abide in His love.  
O'ershadowing you is the wing of His care,  
Omniscient to guard, and almighty to bear.  
As the eagle forsakes not her shelterless brood,  
But warms them, and feeds them, yet callow, with blood,  
So His chosen and faithful ones, feeble and few,  
The Saviour will cherish, defend and renew,  
Till winged, they ascend the invisible height,  
And dwell in the presence of Infinite Light.

1st Feb., 1882.

C. H. M.



## Letters by the Household of Faith.

LETTER BY THE LATE MR. STEDMAN.

Robertsbridge, February 13, 1880.



AM sure that they who knew the truth of the gospel under the late Mr. Vinall, sen., find "that which is wanting cannot be numbered" in almost all Calvinistic preachers. 'Tis not what *is* said, but what is *not* said that is wanting. How deficient is the ministry of the day in what is the hardest part of it, as appears by Paul's solemn charge to Timothy, (2 Tim. iv. 1, 2), namely, reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all longsuffering and doctrine. Our times bear the features of the times portrayed in the history given in the four last chapters of Judges. The key to the whole of the said scenes is the word—the significant word, "There was no king in Israel in those days, but every one did that which was right in his own eyes." In chapter xviii. 7, it is said, "They were quiet and secure, and there was no magistrate in the land that might *put them to shame in anything*." Thus they lived *careless* as to maintaining good works, which none are concerned about but those who truly believe (Titus iii. 8). Many will preach nothing but the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, and they have hearers determined to hear no other: but as to rebuke, reproof, and exhortation to holiness of life, as a natural consequence of union to Christ, it is laid aside by preachers with the good liking of the hearers. But what the scriptures assert as sound doctrine (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4) these spurn and sneer at as legal. Are not these a terrible sort of "blind leading the blind" into the pit, without halting and fearing, and in the security of a false confidence, which Satan encourages the poor deluded ones to believe is mighty faith, which admits of little (if any) doubt at all, in some cases I have met with.

This was not the character of Mr. Vinall's ministry. It did not lack these condiments (rebuke, reproof or exhortation) to needful vigorous and faithful self-examination, prayer, and diligent painful labours to be *right* and found right, coupled with an inward principle of love to God and His laws, to walk worthy of His high calling—which they profess before men for their profit (Titus iii. 8); but first and specially that God may be glorified and honoured, and His name hallowed in their body and spirit. These, at times, they hope are His, by choice, purchase, conquest and their own voluntary surrender; though often, nay, more or less daily, assaulted by sense, reason, unbelief, and Satan's temptations, as to the reality of their faith, hope, or love. Hence they are kept *alive* by the feelings of death in their souls. *Awake* by the burden of sinful sleepiness. *Safe* by

the felt sense of danger from enemies seen and felt. *Strong* by felt and absolute weakness. *Bold* by the felt timorousness and fear: as Hart says,

“Let the danger make thee bolder:  
War in weakness, dare in doubt.”

Their *joys* come out of sorrows—*Mercies* out of miseries—*Riches* out of poverty—*Blessings* out of cursing—Salvation out of destruction, and *Heaven* out of hell. At least I find it so, which makes a daily cross, and the great and much tribulation through which the highway to God's kingdom lies; which in God's mercy is made a maul to my pride, destruction to my wisdom, strength, knowledge, and self-sufficiency: and these judgments of His, in the way of which God's children wait for Him, like Jordan's waters, clean and pure, rapid and irresistible, wash away all the fleshly confidence they have into the Dead Sea: and would carry their souls to hell, did not the ark appear with those who bear it with going in its waters, and arrest its course with a “Deliver him from being down to the pit, for I have found a ransom.” Hence the poor sinner goes through the judgment and comes out of the terrible ordeal blameless, unprovable, without spot or blemish, or any such thing. Thus “the just lives by his *faith*—We which live are always delivered unto death”—“Bow down sense and reason. Faith only reigns here.” Hence the soul struggles for *life* in the feeling of death—for *faith* in the feeling of unbelief (where it feelingly at times sinks in miry clay where there is no sensible standing)—for *hope*, in the midst of desponding doubts and dismay. Yea at times one has to go into *hell* to find Heaven (as to our feelings). In all these things is the life of the soul. We often ask the Lord to feed us with “knowledge and understanding,” as He has promised to do. The former, if unaccompanied with the latter, is dangerous in the extreme. “Naked knowledge all is vain.” God's people are fed with both. The unscriptural *notion* of sinless perfection by justification from before time, or as some say, from the time He arose from the dead,—which He did for our justification, and which is a glorious truth, affords no proof that I am justified any more than if you prepared a dinner for me do I benefit by it, unless I eat it. “O taste and see.” None can understand the sweet soul-satisfying dainties God has spread but they who taste and see: (*i.e.*) understand by experience either the terror of God in his law, or the love, good will, compassion and favour of God in His Gospel, but by believing which is tasting, eating and drinking to satiety.

“Notion's the harlot's test  
By which the truth's revil'd.  
The child of fancy, finely drest;  
But not the living child.”

Hence the Holy Ghost goes on to speak of the amount of the above in Rom. v. after saying He (Christ) "rose again for our justification." "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God," &c. No peace can be enjoyed by the fact of Christ's rising again for our justification without *faith* which worketh by love, "and that not of ourselves (either in principle or act), it is the gift of God," as is clearly set forth in Hosea xi. 4; no more than a dinner being prepared for a hungry man can satisfy his hunger by the bare knowledge of it. To this end he must eat. For myself I daily feel more and more my end drawing near, and the thought of appearing before God is proportionately weighty and solemn. At times the sinkings of soul in terror and dismay lest I should miss the mark of the prize are indescribable. On the other hand, when equally, or rather more heavily weighted with sensible consolations and joy of the Holy Ghost, accompanied at times with an agony of mind, as the thought that I must, if I live, come down from this altitude into darkness, sore conflicts, and doubts again, together with Satan's challenges as to the being of a God—of a Heaven or Hell—that the scriptures are true, and if these are realities, what proof have you of being one of *His*? What close corners has the enemy driven me into with these challengings, and then bragging that I could not answer him, which I have been obliged to admit before him at times. Once and again when the Lord (I trust) in mercy has brought this test again and again to my mind, and I have said, "Well, I do not know, Satan, that I *am* His, or that I *am not* His. But it is written: "The foundation of God *standeth sure*, having *THIS SEAL*, (it is the great seal of Heaven), *the Lord knoweth them that are His.*" This is the secret evidence sealed; to which an open evidence is always appended and sealed to (viz.): "And let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from all iniquity." Such as do so indeed groan under sin daily, and lay their prayers before the Lord that they may turn away from their iniquity and understand, i.e., experience His truth, the Gospel of His Son, Daniel ix. 13. Hart defines a just man by this very thing truly and substantially—

"The spirits of the Just,  
Confin'd in bodies groan

(not those of the unjust),

'Till death consigns the corpse to dust,  
And then the conflict's done."

G. STEDMAN.

'To the above important letters a few remarks may be appended without detriment to it or to the excellent writer. Probably none, or few, have passed through more than we of "the terrors of law and of God." But having experienced the power of deliverance, by the Holy Spirit's application of the blood and righteousness of Christ, we would not have the Lord's people to gather from the above that

they are not to *expect* to live free from *daily anxiety* about death and their future eternal state. This would be misleading in the extreme. The confidence of the Apostle is what the Spirit can convey to all His people; and which he does convey to many: "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Also: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Yet too true it is that, there are many who live on bare doctrine (sound and clear), who know nothing of its sweetness in the enjoyment of salvation by Christ and the smiles of the Lord, and whose bold and light conduct sets at defiance those precepts which relate to tender walking in the fear of the Lord. These characters we are exhorted to shun. Jesus is on their lips, but Satan in their lives and tempers. On the other hand, had it pleased the blessed Spirit more to favour our good brother, he would have hardly dwelt so much on the dark side, while none the less faithful in exposing "the child of fancy," as distinguished from "the living child." The Lord's people being, as Peter affirms, "called unto liberty," it behoves us to be careful, while probing and testing, not to lead into bondage and impose a legal yoke on those who are redeemed from the curse of the law by the precious blood of Christ,—a course of teaching which so exalts Mr. Hart as a gospel poet.

THE EDITOR

## LETTER BY RUTH BRYAN.

## DROPS OF LATTER RAIN.



LESS the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name, that here the Spirit hath flowed as oil from vessel to vessel; and the Lord hath given the instructions of wisdom to His wayfaring pilgrims, though fools, and of the weaker sort, and the baser sort too. Thine, O Lord, is the power, and the glory, and the majesty. All this heavenly store cometh of Thee; and in pouring back praises, "of Thy own we give Thee." Thou art worthy O Lord. "Now, therefore, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name."

Surely, again I met the King of Princes in His lowly garb this morning in the 3rd chapter of Lamentations. Oh, did He not say "Behold Me, behold Me!" "I am the Man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath,"—not wrath against the precious person of His Son, but wrath against the sins of His people found on Him; because Himself had laid them there. "He hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all;" therefore the wrath descended upon Him to the uttermost that those sins merited; and therefore "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him," because those *huge sins* were on that precious person. "He hath led Me (said He) and brought Me into darkness," &c. "Against Me (not you, My bride) is His hand turned. He hath led me into dark places, as they that be dead of old," &c.

O the depths! the depths of matchless love, which went to the depths of hell to save "His sister, spouse." Truly, "if I make

my bed in hell, Thou art there," to bring me up again; for no hell remains to those for whom He felt all this affliction of wrath. But I need not go on. Read it; and if you have found Him therein, there is more dew in the deep yet couching beneath. How beautiful is verse 22; the "WE" comes in,—Christ and His bride. Not condemned in those fires of wrath where his humanity was. "The bush burning with fire and yet *not consumed*." Oh, may the Spirit turn us aside from all else to see this great sight. Truly it *was* of the Lord's covenant mercies that the fire was kindled *on Him* Who was strong to *bear*; while we in Him were safely housed from harm. He covered our head in that day of battle. He bore it all; and was unconsumed; and now because He lives we do and *shall live also*. He was cast off (see verse 31; see also Psalm lxxxix. 38, &c.; and Matthew xxvii., 43 to 46); but there is *nearness* for us. He had the frown that we might have *eternal smile*; and He was not cast off for ever, but has entered the Holy place for us; and we have entered *in Him*; and shall enter *by Him*, (Psalm xxiv, verse 3 to end; Hebrews ix. 12, and x. 19). Oh praise Him; praise the worthy Lamb. "Had we a thousand hearts to give; a thousand hearts should all be Thine; for Thou wouldst nill them all." And now as you have passed by the great Him for the little him; pass by the little him for the great Him, who so filleth all things that possessing Him without any other object, there is no lack; and forsaking all *for Him* you shall find *all in Him*. What a satisfying portion is our heavenly Elkanah, Who ever loves His poor barren Hannah; and says, "Am I not better to thee than ten sons?" Yea, Thou art our Heaven above and below. "It was but a little I passed by them but I found Him."

It has flowed out as it flowed in; and no man can retain the Spirit, but HE can bring the bread up again "on the waters of the soul after many days," (Eccles. xi. 1; Psalm cxv. 1).

Ever yours,

RUTH.

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#### LETTER BY THORPE SMITH.

S. Nichols-street, Humberstone-road,

Leicester, April 6th, 1875.

Dear Cousin,—I was agreeably surprised to receive a letter from you yesterday, and hope by its contents your soul is kept alive in famine; for in those places where the gospel is preached only a very few times in the year, it may be styled, in a certain sense, a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. It is, however, the sole prerogative of God to quicken and keep the souls of His people alive at any and all times; and this I have found, for 52 years past,

He generally does by the use of the rod and furnace. Both are in the hands of Infinite Wisdom, and my fool's back has oft required them. The last twelve months have been attended with more affliction on me than any year of my life, and I walk in much darkness ; finding, as dear Hart says,

" my latter stages worse,  
And travel much by night."

I am often sorely tried to know the difference between nature wrought upon, and the operation of God's Spirit: for I am a man of very tender feelings, and cannot read an affecting narrative without being moved to tears. I have been much tried about these things for years, and am plagued with them still. I know that the comforting visitations of the Holy Spirit sink me in the dust of self-loathing and self-abasement, and lead me to exalt the Lamb of God above everything, and crown Him Lord of all. These visits, with me, are short, transient, and far between. I oft cry, " Lord, suffer me not to be deceived; search me and know my heart, and see if there be in me any lurking sin indulged in; make it known, and purge it, by fresh applications of the blood of Christ to my conscience." I know believers are called to walk by faith and not by sight; yet I am like a child mourning after the breast. I have much enjoyed Bourne's Letters, and oft feel ashamed of myself when I read them; as I do those of our late dear pastor.\* I much enjoyed an hour with Mr. Wakefield a few weeks ago; found him a well-taught man of God. I have had some sweet letters from the sons of dear Mrs. E. Shelbourn, late of Hough: two of them are, I believe, truly taught of God. She was one well taught. Few of my correspondents wrote more spiritual letters than she. I hope her husband is a man taught of God. O, what a pitiful, paltry, false profession is the great bulk of the profession of this day. It tends to lead me to dig deep; to heart-searching; coming to the light daily, dreading the thought of being deceived.

If you come to the Conference, you can have nice and comfortable lodgings with Mrs. Lee, a widow with one daughter; a good woman, I believe; a niece of the late Mr. Poyson's (who married a Shaw from Grantham—the Royal Oak). She was a widow of Hilton's, of Stathern. Mrs. Lee lives in Erskine-street, nearly opposite to Zion Chapel (Mr. Hazelrigg's). I expect to come home from Donnington on the Thursday, and shall not be able to get to the first morning's meeting, but hope to be at home for tea, and in good time for the evening meeting, and Friday too all day. I shall be glad to see you and yours, and treat you at my lodgings. If you come before I arrive home take a cab from

\*Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

the station, and tell cabby to drive you to Mrs. Lee's, Erskine-street, just by Zion Chapel! She will direct you in all you require I doubt not; you can drop her a line if you think well. I have seen her and spoken to her about you and your girl if you come; and she at once said, I can lodge them! I don't live more than six minutes' walk from her. Give my love to all your dear fatherless off-spring, and all my relations and friends around you. When last at G—— I called on Mr. Ogden, Mrs. Whittaker, and Mrs. Nixon. Death has been busy amongst us here, and amongst our Newark hearers. The Lord bless, guide, teach, and keep you and yours, me and mine, evermore, from all evil, to His kingdom and glory.

I remain, thine truly in Jesus, my only hope,

THORPE SMITH.

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## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

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INFIDELITY IS a poisonous tree, growing on the dunghill of a depraved heart, and is known by its variegated foliage, its deadly fruits, and its baneful influence. Its foliage (public pretensions) exhibits specious colours, such as reason, liberty, and pleasure, which appear on the face, but madness, slavery, and desperation, are underneath the leaf.


Its fruits are brought forth in abundance, producing the most destructive effects. Arrogance, selfishness, revenge, and licentiousness, are among its prominent productions, and appear conspicuous in the lives of many of its abettors; others (yea, the worst of infidels) assume the name of Christianity, while they blasphemously deny all its distinguishing glories, and treacherously attempt to tear out its vitals, by disputing the Godhead of Christ. These have eaten of the pharisaical pride which grows on the same poisonous tree, the very juices of which are enmity against God.

The baneful influence of Infidelity, whether openly professed, or hidden under the name of rational religion, is seen and felt in society, in the social circle, and sooner or later in the sinner's awful case. In society, it is the demon of anarchy—in the social circle, it is the assassin of happiness—and in the sinner's awful case, it is the seed of despair. It robs man of everything dear, and gives him nothing in exchange—it blinds his eyes, shuts his ears, and hardens his heart; it opens the door to every vice—sears the conscience—gives a licence to base passions, and, at last, plunges its mad victims into everlasting torment. O Reader! beware of this pestilential effluvia, which is spreading all around you, and against which there is no antidote but the grand realities of the religion of Jesus, which have been counterfeited in various ways, subjecting them to the sneers of infidels.

J. IRONS.

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"I WILL LOVE THEE, O LORD, MY STRENGTH."

E love Him, because He first loved us," is the grand truth pervading the entire of Holy Scripture, and ratified in all ages in the experience of the Lord's people. It is only as the Lord reveals His incomparable love, and sheds it abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost, that their love is enkindled in return. For what are they in and of themselves? Although so precious in the Lord's eyes and purposes; so honourable in their standing and acceptance in the Beloved, in Whom they have "redemption through His blood," yet in themselves they are, and feel so, by the Spirit's teaching, "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17.

But faith and prayer, prompted and wrought by the blest Spirit, bring them into a happy acquaintance with the fulness of the Saviour. His "durable riches and righteousness" become realized. Their convictions, apprehensions, sufferings and sorrows are overruled to cause them to "cry unto the Lord in their trouble: and He saveth them out of their distresses." Psalm cvii. And every believer who has thus been delivered well understands the effect thereby produced. No language can express it more correctly and sweetly than this: "I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications," Psa. cxvi. 1. The pent-up springs of gratitude and praise are set free by the hand of love that brings the salvation hoped and prayed for: "He causeth His wind to blow, and the waters flow." All winter ends with the appearance of the Beloved. The snow, the storms, the floods, the beating winds cease; fears depart with them, and

"LOVE triumphant reigns."

It was in that memorable day when "the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul," that "David, the servant of the Lord," in the holy delight of his soul (as if unable to contain his feelings any longer) cried out, "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength." His life from the plains of Bethlehem, where he watched the flocks of his father, even to the throne of Israel and Judah, which he at length ascended, was one of the most varied and trying in its nature. If he inherited literally "now, in this time, houses, . . . and lands"—(which, with the major portion of the Lord's people, are usually to be taken wholly in a *spiritual* sense, even when they forsake all for Christ) yet David



found it was "with persecutions," Mark x. 30. Hunted, like a partridge upon the mountains, by Saul; subject to the fickleness of the people; harassed by the factions raised by rival leaders, as Joab and Abner; disgraced in the persons of Ammon and Absalom; betrayed by Ahithophel, and cursed and assailed by Shimei, the Psalmist in all was constrained to view the hand of the Lord, and to ascribe his support under, and extrication out of his perils, to the Lord as his "strength." And losing sight of his kingly dignity, he places on record the *past* as experienced by him in these lowly words: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles," *Psa. xxxiv. 6.*

Considering that in addition to all he endured in his temporal struggles amid the vicissitudes of life, that he was one of the most exercised of men in soul matters, David was in a special sense a miracle of upholding power. He was also as singularly favoured with clear evidence of the covenant love of his God. No language in scripture excels his, in claiming the Lord as his portion, or in describing in prophetic style the glories of the Mediator as seen in the promises "afar off." He rises as high, as in his seasons of depression he sinks low. Like as in mountainous regions the valleys lie at the greatest depth from earth's summit, so it is usually the case, even as it was with David, that they who nestle closest and most frequently in the bosom of everlasting and electing love, sink into the deepest exercises—we do not say, *despair*. For revealed grace and mercy is ever of a confirming and establishing nature, and makes the distinction between the father and babe in Christ.

But how warmly glows the inspired penman's heart; how inflamed are all the powers of his soul; how thoroughly captivated are his heart and will, as he exclaims, "I WILL love Thee, O Lord, my strength!" He stands on the borders of the heavenly Canaan. His toils are nearly over. His enemies have all been subdued. He lives in the affections of his people. But, above and beyond all, He Who was then to come in the flesh is enshrined in the sanctuary of his soul. He, of Whom he says, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only," has become sole monarch of his heart. He finds no place for self, earth, or creatures. His God is all in all to him, and absorbed he cries, "I will love Thee." With the light of the Sun of Righteousness beaming refulgently

upon his eyes, he can see nothing of this world's honours and toys. All he is, and all he has attained unto, is of the richest grace. His God, his Saviour, has led and brought him through all his trials, and His strength has been to him "the strength of salvation."

Thus shall all God's chosen, when He turns their captivity, as He surely will in every case in due season,—proclaim the praise of the Lord, and magnify the riches of His mercy, while their love like a flowing stream returns to Him whence it first proceeded.

THE EDITOR.

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### SOUND COUNSEL FOR ALL EXERCISES.

Fareham, March 24th, 1881.

Dear Sir,—

I send you the following letter, not knowing if you will think proper to re-publish it, for the encouragement of the tried and deeply exercised family of God, written in the year of my nativity :—

G.O.

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Leicester, October, 31st, 1800.

My dear sister in Christ Jesus,

I received yours, but had not time in town to acknowledge the receipt of the same. I thank you, but am sorry for the needless expense, as times are hard, and the pockets of God's children seldom overladen with the treasure which constitutes a portion in this life. I hope to turn the trinket into a Galeed, or a pillar of memorial, to be in future a witness against me, or a monitor to me, if I should forget when I am indulged with secret access at the throne of grace. The impulse you have for some time been under that your faith would be tried, is, I think, a lesson from the anointing which is from above. God the Holy Ghost is not only to guide us into all truth, but He is to shew us things to come; which inward teaching is true, but not always perceived, nor attended to till the calamity comes on or is over. "The thing which I greatly feared" (says Job) "is fallen upon me;" and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not at ease, neither had I rest; neither was I quiet, yet trouble came. Genuine faith will abide the fire, but untried faith is not to be depended on. God's word, as well as God's Spirit, witnesseth that bonds and afflictions abide the saints. To be previously alarmed is to be equipped beforehand. That, as the fool in the gospel laid up goods for many years, so should we in times of indulgence lay in a stock of prayers against future desertions. "And now, also, when I am old and grey-

headed, forsake me not" (saith the Psalmist), "Thou God of my salvation." To listen to the warning, to be instructed by it, and to be much in prayer to God, before the trial comes on, quenches the fiery furnace before we are cast into it. The fear, trouble and great distress of Jacob at the report of Esau's approach with four hundred men, were ten times worse than the meeting of him; for instead of killing Jacob, he kissed him. But then Jacob had wrestled and prevailed with God and man, and had obtained a promise of complete victory in answer to his prayer, before he ventured himself over the river Jabbok. My dear sister knows how to make the application.

Moreover, forget not that God is a present help in time of trouble. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou passest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Thou hast His word with thee; let that be thy comfort, thy counsel, and thy meditation, in the course of thy pilgrimage; and then thou mayest take the same to be thine inheritance; for truth shall be "settled in heaven," and mercy shall be "built up for ever," in the promised glorification of all the elect of God.

Again, as thou hast mentioned to me some of thy distress, on account of thine inbred corruption and evil tempers, let me counsel my dear sister upon these things. It is the law—the moral law, and nothing else, that discovers these things. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died," and evil tempers are stirred up by the same. "The law worketh wrath." Looking to that, striving to keep it, and labouring under it, brings the wrath revealed in it upon us; for this stirs up our enmity against God. Walking in the faith of Christ, and looking to Him, changes us into His image. Looking to the law, like the Galatians, is going wrong. "The foolishness of man perverteth his way," says Solomon, "and his heart fretteth against the Lord." Legal bondage, and the fear of death and wrath, all come from a broken law; even as a man who has robbed, killed, or done violence is never safe, never easy, because the laws of his country are against them. Therefore look to the Saviour, cleave to Him, and abide in Him. "He that abideth in Me bringeth forth much fruit."

Farewell, my dear sister, the God of all grace be with thee and thine. So prays thy affectionate friend and brother in the Lord Jesus Christ,

W. HUNTINGTON.

My love to the Captain.

[Very many thanks to dear friend Aquila, for his article on the

Blood of Atonement. Dew, unction and power have been the sweet effects attending it to my anxious soul.

May grace, and peace be with him, and with all the blood-bought family of God. Amen and amen.

That precious blood atones all sin,  
And fully clears from guilt;  
His mercy is for ever sure.  
It makes the foulest sinner clean,  
For 'twas for sinners spilt;  
His mercy is for ever sure.


He raised me from the lowest state,  
When Hell was my desert,  
His mercy is for ever sure.  
I broke His law, and (more than that,)  
Alas, I broke His heart:  
His mercy is for ever sure.

My soul thou hast (let what will ail)  
A never changing Friend:  
His mercy is for ever sure.  
When brethren, friends, and helpers fail  
On Him alone depend:  
His mercy is for ever sure.]

G. OAKSHOTT.

### CHRIST OUR SURETY.

*"I have found David My servant; with My holy oil have I anointed Him."*—Psalm lxxxix. 20.

 HE above portion of Holy Writ having been affixed to my mind with power in the night season, and followed me for some time, it led me to consider of what importance it could be to me. Upon consideration I find it to be a matter of vast importance to me, a guilty and hell-deserving sinner, that a Surety has been "found." It amounts to this,—“Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have FOUND a ransom,” Job xxxiii. 24. One poet says,

“Our ransom and peace, our surety He is,  
Come, see if there ever were sorrows like His.”

The passages that follow the text I have quoted, show what our Surety was anointed for;—that His seed should be made to endure for ever, and His throne as the days of heaven. If His children forsook His law, and walked not in His judgments; if they broke His statutes, and kept not His commandments, then He would visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. *Nevertheless*, His loving kindness He will not utterly take from them, nor suffer His faithfulness to fail. “Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips.” When God could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, “Surely blessing I will bless thee,” Hebrews vi. 13, 14. So it follows,

“Believers in Jesus, how blest is your case!  
 Ye are heirs of His glory, and trophies of grace;  
 Though strangers awhile in an enemy's land,  
 Your portion is sure, for the Lord is at hand.”

But some poor troubled soul will say,—How may I know whether I have a saving interest in Christ, and am a partaker of His exceeding great and precious promises? I answer, by the effects. Have you a longing desire for a Surety? Do you see your own righteousnesses as altogether filthy rags? Is the language of your soul, “Give me Christ, or else I die?” or, is it the opposite language?—“Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways,” Job xxi. 14.

One thing Christ was anointed for was, to communicate a new nature to His poorer brethren; which is repentance towards God, and faith towards Christ. That new nature is imparted in regeneration. An apple graft cannot bring forth crabs, and that which is born of God cannot sin. The old nature of man is sin itself, and brings forth nothing but sin in the sight of God; and that lurks in the regenerate, although subdued. For it is written: “The elder shall serve the younger.” The new nature implanted is holy and divine; and, as Mr. Hart says,—

“When on the boughs rich fruit we see,  
 ’Tis then we cry, A goodly tree.”

Another effect of being made a partaker of saving grace in the case of notorious sinners, is a reformed life. I do not believe there is any such thing as a true reformation, but what is derived from the fountain of life. Peter says, “Whom God hath sent to bless you, by turning every one of you from your iniquities,” Acts iii. 26. However, those who are rightly taught will not rest in their reformation. This would only be another form of self-righteousness. With those who have been more outwardly moral it is more difficult to discern the change. But another thing our Surety was anointed for was, to work out a perfect and complete righteousness, such as the law demanded; and all of us, both little sinners and great must be clothed in it. This He gives freely to all who feel their need, in justification; for “He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one believeth.” See Paul’s Epistle to the Romans.

“And lest the shadow of a spot  
 Should on my soul be found,  
 He took the robe the Saviour wrought  
 And cast it all around.”

Thus we see Christ is anointed a Surety and representative of all His redeemed ones; and as the holy anointing of the High Priest of old descended to the skirts of His garment, so Christ having entered the Holiest of Holies, His benefits descend to every

vessel of mercy; He being exalted to give them repentance and remission of sins. "Great deliverance giveth He to His King; and sheweth mercy to His anointed, to David, and to His seed for evermore," Psalm xviii. 50.

Brighton.

GEORGE BROOKS.

### CONFORMITY TO CHRIST.

"*Christ as a Son [faithful] over His Own house.*"—Hebrews iii. 6.

"*Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, for ever.*"—Psalm xciii. 15.

(*A Reprint*).

Thou art holy! O to be  
One in holiness with Thee;  
Pure in purity, as Light!—  
Pleasing in the Father's sight.  
I by nature am not so;  
All is sin and death and woe;  
All corrupt and filthy too;  
Loathsome in Jehovah's view.  
But (O wonderment of grace!)  
I desire to see Thy face.  
Whence this longing? can it spring  
From a deadly noxious thing?  
From a mind that hateth Thee?  
With its carnal enmity  
Questioning Thy right to rule?  
Showing that 'tis but a fool.—  
No, the source is from above  
In the boundless sea of love.  
1880.

"God is Love:" and so I prove,  
Love to Him springs from His love:  
Thus this longing after Thee  
Must of Thine Own nature be,  
Pure and spotless, free from sin,  
Thine eternal Life within.  
Tyrant sin's DOMINION gone,  
Glad Thy righteous rule I own.  
Now Thy Spirit leadeth me  
In the paths of liberty;  
Passing through this weary world  
With truth's banner bright unfurled;  
Warring against sin and self,  
With its love of power and pelf:  
Clad in panoply complete;  
Made in Christ, for glory meet;  
More than conqueror by faith  
In Him Who conquer'd sin and death.

H. M. H.

### GOD'S WAYS WITH MAN FROM THE BEGINNING.

THE LORD'S COMING AND CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS.

(*Concluded from page 210*).

When the church shall have been taken to be for ever with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 13-18,) and the Gentiles—the olive branches grafted in contrary to nature—have been cut off, the natural branches will be "grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again." That is to say, the church interval being over—finally closed time—according to the prophetic order, once more begins to run its interrupted course, and the unfulfilled week of Daniel's prophecy is told out to its solemnly glorious completion—for the end is glorious. Now it is with this week commence the judgments which precede and usher in the day of the Lord, in due order for the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, as unfolded in the body of the Book of the Revelation (Chap. iv. 22, also Matt. xxiv. and xxv. chapters.) These judgments may be broadly divided into four distinctively different classes.

First, we get the Jews—the two tribes—and that before the rest of the Israelities will be restored to the land after fearful troubles, from which a portion only will escape. It was the Jews who rejected Christ, it will be the Jews who will receive the anti-Christ, who will enter into league with “The Prince that shall come”—the last phase of the Gentile powers—and will worship his image; “the abomination of desolation set up in the holy place”—the culminating height of wickedness, man set up in the holy place as God and worshipped, which brings down immediate judgments from God. Still there is “the remnant according to the election of grace.” Some faithful ones who will refuse to have any part in these last disgusting scenes of wickedness, and lawlessness; who will in consequence be persecuted with fearful persistency, and pertinacious malignity; many of them as we know will be killed, and the rest with many cruelties driven into exile. The time will be one of untold tribulation—emphatically “The great tribulation”—and, but for its shortness, “no flesh could be saved.” But this is the very time the Lord Himself will “appear”—and we, the church, who have been caught up to Him, and with Him—“in power and great glory,” will destroy that wicked with the brightness of His coming; and the followers of the anti-Christ with the sword of His mouth. Thus, “easing Himself of His adversaries and avenging Him of His enemies.” And the effect on the nations will be “like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap.” But those who “shall abide the day of His coming”—the purged remnant—who “come out of the great tribulation” washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb—“shall be a holy people, their dross purged away, their judges restored as at the first, and their counsellors as at the beginning, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city.” “Thus shall Zion be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.” Yes, and so “the destruction of the transgressors, and of the sinner shall be together, and they that forsake Jehovah shall be consumed.” But this is all preparatory, even before the elect remnant of Israel—the lost ten tribes—will be brought back and made to inhabit the land.

Second, and altogether beside these purging judgments which we have looked at, there will be other solemnly righteous acts of retribution reserved for that dreadful period of visitation. On Babylon as a whole, but especially on the utterly corrupt carcass of the well-known, long, and highly favoured christendom who will continue in their mock ceremonies, and religious amusements until they shall “come into remembrance;” and the blood-shed, and the crimes committed in the sacred Name of Christ, will be most righteously avenged. “The beast” and his confederates—whilst they themselves are engaged in following a still more horrible and fear-

ful delusion—will “hate the whore” and “make her desolate.” Yes; the very powers who created her, fed her vanities, and supported her extravagances, and so readily became the willing dupes to her witcheries, will turn upon her with unparalleled bitterness, bringing against her the very cruel acts and bloody deeds they themselves—or the powers they represent—had been her ready instruments to execute to its bitter end; but the tables will then be turned, then indeed “the cup which she hath filled shall be filled to her the double.” Rev. xvii. and xviii.

Thus then, and altogether besides the fall of Babylon, is particularly shown the final doom of that soulless profession of Christ—all that heart sickening and lifeless ecclesiastical organization which will survive—and probably more than revive—when all true believers shall have been removed to “the Father’s house” above. But now it behoves us to most carefully observe by whom, and by what means this apostate body of all manner of confusions—these corrupt systems of men, Satan’s counterfeit of the body of Christ—are altogether destroyed. Why, to be sure it is by the beast, and his coadjutors; the very same—representatively—who stood charged with having committed fornication with her, and her harlots. Yes, indeed, it is that wicked head of—and with—the Gentile powers whose pride and blasphemy will at length draw down the lightnings of God’s avenging wrath. Then this impious chief, with “the kings of the earth” in league with him “take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed,” and fill up their measure quickly. Psalm ii.

This associated Gentile dominion in the third class will be dealt with in the judgments of the last week of the seventy weeks of Daniel’s prophecy. This confederacy, headed by “the Prince” energised by Satan, will form a league with the mass of Jews and their false Christ, and will gather together their forces to battle, when Christ will appear in His glory, followed by the armies of heaven; will take the beast, and false prophet, and cast them alive into the lake of fire; and afterwards destroy their followers with the sword that proceeded out of His mouth; and so bring to a perpetual end “The times of the Gentile:”—that is the period during which the sceptre of the government of the world was entrusted to their hands because of the failure of Israel.

4th.—But there is also another class of judgment which must necessarily include the whole of the Gentile powers who have successively held the right of government as a trust from God (however little they have valued it as such; or however much they may have valued it as such; or however much they may have used it for their own glory instead of His) clearly this does not include the whole of the nations or of all the people of the earth, but those



only under this sceptre of Gentile dominion as indicated under the several phases of the prophecies in the book of Daniel. For this sceptre passed from the Babylonian, to the Persian; from the Persian to the Greek; from the Greek to the Roman; and again, as revived—its final phase—to that wicked king, whose pending doom we have been looking at above. But this fatal confederacy, as between the Jews, and the last phase of the Roman dominion, will be directed against a power which at that time will threaten Jerusalem with destruction. And this power which God uses, like the Assyrian of old, as a scourge to the unfaithful Jews will, when the hour of judgment comes, itself also be visited; for when half the city has been carried off, then the remnant of the people according to the election of grace shall be saved, and delivered alive for the Millennium.

Now this will bring to a close these preliminary judgments. The nations having been thoroughly purged, Babylon consumed, the last Satanic form of the Gentile dominion overthrown: and the enemies who sought to destroy Jerusalem scattered and thinned, and driven back, Christ's kingdom will be established on earth. The saints who have come judged out of "the great tribulation" will receive dominion under Him; the rest—that is those of the nations of the Gentiles—will be divided into two classes; and rewarded, or punished according to how they had received, and their manner of treatment, of some whom the Lord so graciously refers to as "These My brethren," ever such a feeble remnant of saints, who had been driven into their midst for His Name sake, carrying their testimony with them: but so reduced, harassed, and wasted by the persecutions of the beast and false prophet as to have a claim on their sympathy equal to His Own. But the great feature in all this, and the principle object of all is the entire fulfilment of all God's counsels concerning the earth, and the carrying out of His eternal purposes according to His holiness in the glorious person of His Own unparalleled beauty—"the Second Man the Lord from heaven," Who alone is worthy to receive the dominion: and Who alone can use, and duly exercise the same at once and entirely for God's glory, and for man's best good in every state of blessing. For from hence we see Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit: and "the Bride the Lamb's Wife" is seen in a figure for glory and for beauty, as the New Jerusalem coming down out from the heavens from God, having the glory of God (Rev. xxi. 10; xxii. 5; see also chap. xx. 4-6), "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and will reign with Christ a thousand years. And it is Christ Himself who will constitute, and be to them in deed, in truth and in love, their abiding place for ever—that is the "whole families of heaven"—the church, and the heavenly saints.

But oh! It is indeed terribly solemn to trace the bitter and incurable hatred of the heart of fallen human nature, and that especially toward God who always stands in direct contrast by requiring always good for evil; this the natural man cannot bear. No! "a thousand years," experience of Christ's righteous, holy, blessed, and glorious rule, in goodness, truth and love, will not suffice to change the nature of man. Oh, no! for no sooner is Satan loosed from his imprisonment of absolute restraint, than the nations rebel; but only to be destroyed with devouring fire from heaven (Rev. xx. 7-10). For this is the very last of the many terrible outbreaks of human wickedness. Yes, thanks be to God; this indeed brings the world's history of iniquity to its solemnly glorious close. The earth is burnt up, the elements melt with fervent heat: and no place is found for them. Then the dead, who had no part in the first resurrection, are raised, and judged, according to their works, and are cast into the lake of fire. Observe they are *raised* before judged: so it is in resurrection life they are cast into the lake of fire; and as they were judged solely on the ground of their works, not one escaped the lake of fire. So Satan, Death and Hades are all similarly committed to perpetual destruction from the presence of the Lord.

What then? The last enemy has been destroyed—totally vanquished—at length by righteous judgments executed—and that according to the glorious work of reconciliation founded on the blood of His cross, and God's answer is complete: for we get new heavens and a new earth as a consequence; in which righteousness not only reigns—as during the "thousand years"—but permanently dwells. That is, Christ having ruled in truth, and by righteous judgments till He hath put all enemies under His feet. Then as a matter of fact we *shall* see all things under Him: still Himself subject as the very Man in all this glory—as the Mighty conqueror wholly for God delivers up the kingdom to God, and that manifested in the beauty of love and holiness. "God is all and in all." No more estrangements by reason of human guilt and failure; no longer a matter of faith, for God makes His tabernacle with man, and love abides for ever.

Now, as such are the blessed and solemnly glorious facts concerning this poor perishing world—as traced out for us in the word of the living God—and as this is the sure and certain prospect before the world, we would ask with all solemnity, "Are these the very things even Christians are looking for?" Amidst all the tall talk of modern progress, all the straining after improvements, education and culture, and all the boast of the bright future in store

for this very world which God has declared to be irreparably sunken in iniquity, and only ripening for these great and sore judgments we have been looking at, and to which the world is fast hastening. But alas! christians in general have totally failed to grasp the solemn truth—that God's judgments are indeed looming over the whole scene—and, sad to say, christendom as a whole stand more or less affected in the intoxication of this world's banquet. So much so that they do not heed the fingers of the hand tracing on the wall the fateful words, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN—more blind than Belshazzar to all the solemn warnings God has given. Yea, are they not ever fostering the false hopes of the world, in those very things against which they should be protesting? But instead of which they themselves are eagerly floating along these pleasurable streams of modern progress in blissful ignorance that it is certainly sweeping them down its fatal rapids to the crush and roar of impending judgments. Ah! soon, we know not how soon; but certainly not before "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16-17). Oh, bless the Lord, we shall be with Him in person as well as in Spirit, heart and affection. But then, what will become of modern progress, and all these things of which man so vainly boasts? What will then be the fruit of all their organisations and associations for the making of a something out of that nature which scripture declares to be wholly and only "enmity against God?" Or to bring something good out of the very world which has rejected and crucified its rightful Lord, only because He was entirely good and holy? But we have seen the end of all. These boasted ecclesiastical organisations when bereft of believers will have nothing Godward—will indeed be nothing more nor less but a putrid corpse, so hateful to the nations, that they will burn it to ashes. So alas, the noisy and scheming party of progress, though turning in utter disgust from this ghastly mimicry of Christianity to the latest novelty of the day, will be given up to "strong delusions that they should believe a lie," &c., &c., 2 Thes. ii. 7-17.


Oh! Beloved in the Lord! Have we, as believers, in truth and in love, God's thoughts about what is passing before us? What are we looking for, and hastening unto in the goodness and grace of God? Are we taking heed unto His way, or are we "minding earthly things?" As others "whose end is destruction," &c., lightly esteeming, if not despising, these solemn warnings of these sacred scriptures, and so burying ourselves in the van

pursuit of seeking to improve that which God has pronounced to be so utterly bad as to be beyond remedy? Or, have we given up the First man—the old Adam—entirely? And, as it is our privilege, do we “reckon ourselves dead indeed” in order that we may be practically “alive unto God;” in truth and in love One with Him Whom the world has rejected: “Whom the heavens must receive:” to Whom God has given a place at His own right hand—“*for us.*” Oh! “Blessed hope!” Now, we are privileged to be waiting with Him, as well as for Him—though the day and hour remains a secret in the bosom of God. “Behold, I come quickly,” &c., is the watchword for us. Because for sure He must first come for us: and we be with Him in the glory, in our “glorious body like unto His glorious body:” and righteous judgments executed on this sin-polluted world. Then, and not until then, shall the world’s real improvement be brought about to perfection, and that by the Lord Himself, in His own sacred Person—the Second Man; the Last Adam; the only One Who can, and will carry out God’s purposed blessing for the earth, as well as heavenly bliss; and also establish God’s rule of righteousness and true holiness. Amen.

Hereford.

HENRY LAWFORD.

#### DR. HAWKER ON “ELECTION.”

 HE mystery of election, which now excites so much bitterness in the breast of the carnal, while it calls forth the unceasing wonder of all the redeemed, will cease to be a mystery and surprise when the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one shall be found arranged under their respective heads, and Christ is beheld encircled with His family, and the devil with his. The whole congregated world will at once and intuitively discover that the election of grace included the whole of Christ’s kingdom, and that the rejection of the rest (as they are called in Rom. xi. 7), referred only to the kingdom of Satan, Matt. xii. 6. And here the mystery ends.

This great truth, indeed, was preached to the church, and by the Lord Himself immediately on the Fall. For when the Lord God pronounced sentence on the old serpent, the devil, (so called, Rev. xii. 9.) these are His words, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed,” Gen. iii. 15. Mark the expression, *thy seed*; that is, the seed of the serpent; and her seed, that is of the woman; most decidedly showing that the serpent has a seed as well as the woman. And these are not angels, for there is no propagation of angels by seed; neither in scripture are they ever so described. But the seed of the serpent are men, as are the seed of the woman—or of Christ, Who

is meant by the seed of the woman. And hence we find the different seeds uniformly marked through the whole Bible.

The apostle John declares Cain to have been of that wicked one, meaning the devil. John does not say he was tempted of that wicked one to slay his brother; but he was of him, that is, his seed, 1 John iii. 10-12. And the Lord Jesus thus marked the whole race. He called them serpents; a generation of vipers which could not escape the damnation of hell. Matt. xxiii. 33. And in the parable of the good seed and the tares, Jesus in so many words declared that, "the good seed were the children of the kingdom, and the tares the children of the wicked one. The enemy which sowed them is the devil." Matt. xiii. 24-40. And if possible, in yet stronger terms, Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." John viii. 44. Observe, in all these descriptions the Lord does not say they were led away by the temptations of the devil, and acting as his servants and vassals; but that they were his children and with whom, therefore, what they did was as natural, having the same nature as it was their father to do so.

On the other hand, the Holy Ghost has marked the features of the children of Christ, and shown the sure promises God hath given concerning them. They are said to be a people whom God hath formed for Himself, who shall show forth His praise. Isaiah xliii. 21. "A remnant in the midst of many people." Micah v. 8. "A chosen generation." 1 Peter ii. 9. And concerning whom the Lord the Father hath said to Christ, "I will pour My Spirit upon Thy seed and My blessing upon Thine offspring." Isaiah xlv. 3. "As for Me, this is My covenant with them saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon Thee, and My words which I have put in Thy mouth, shall not depart out of Thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of Thy seed, nor out of the mouth of Thy seed's seed, from henceforth, and for ever." Isaiah lix. 21. What can more decidedly show the features of character of the seed which mark each? And what can determine the doctrine more strongly in proof of the two kingdoms?

I have often thought, that had we the faculty of discerning spirits, (as Paul had when filled with the Holy Ghost, he declared Elymas, the sorcerer, to be a child of the devil, Acts xiii. 10), it would not only solve a thousand problems which now often perplex the Lord's people, but it would for ever put a stop to the presumptuous reasonings of weak and foolish men, who would fain have more mercy than the Lord, and are therefore very angry with Him respecting election.

Let me not, however, be mistaken. I speak not as though I thought it were desirable to possess such a faculty in the present

life. Far, very far from it : sure I am it would be productive of many evils, and therefore it is in great mercy withheld from us. But I merely say that, if we could discern spirits, it would so damage the pride of the human heart that none would be found any longer to arraign God's wisdom and God's justice in the exercise of election. For who would then find fault with God in withholding grace from the seed of the serpent? Every child of God would then see the impossibility of giving it. And in instances where, until that discernment was made, a man might lean in wishes towards another; yet when seen, he would no longer cherish such in his bosom, but do as Moses did when he saw his rod turned into a serpent, flee from before it. Exod. iv. 3.

But let it be remembered that though we do not possess such a faculty in the present life, and cannot therefore offer distinguish the precious from the vile, yet our ignorance of the different seeds makes no difference in the seeds themselves. Christ's kingdom and Satan's kingdom; Christ's seed and the serpent's seed are in the world, and as distinct from each other as light and darkness, and as impossible to coalesce and become one as the clay and the iron which the monarch saw in his vision. Dan. ii. 43. The great day of the Lord will explain all, and then the justice and sovereignty of God will be unfolded, and the world shall see that God's election hath included the whole of Christ and His seed, and the reprobation extended to Satan and his seed. Not one of the little ones of Christ's kingdom will be found shut out. Not one of the brood of the serpent taken in. Each kingdom will be marshalled under their respective heads; and the whole plan of the Divine government being laid open to view, will call forth unceasing praise to God, and everlasting joy to His church in Christ Jesus.

But conceive what paleness, what horror, what anguish of soul will overwhelm those men at the discovery, who in this life, merely from their own presumptuous reasonings, and in direct opposition to holy scripture, have impeached the Divine justice in election, and dared to say and write such things of God as I tremble but to read, and consider too blasphemous even to copy off on paper. Is it not with an eye to such the apostle speaks, when in his description of the last day, he saith, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. Jude 14, 15. And while such men must be struck dumb in everlasting silence, the song of Moses and the Lamb will burst forth in unceasing acclamations of praise from the whole election of

grace to the God of their salvation. "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints," Rev. xv. 3.

[From Hawker's Six Discourses on the Person, Godhead, and Ministry of the Holy Ghost.]

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### HERVEY ON 1 JOHN, v. 7.

"There are three that bear witness in Heaven,—the Father, the Logos (Word) and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One." But this we are told is a surreptitious text, foisted by the bigoted espousers of a certain favourite set of doctrines. The only resource this of our opposers, when their case becomes desperate, when conviction flashes in their faces; when every other subterfuge fails; then the pretence of spurious, and interpolated reading is trumped up. It is not to be found, they cry, in some very ancient copy; perhaps, the *Alexandrine MS.* acknowledges no such passage. But this I must be allowed to question. I dare not take our adversaries' bare word; especially since some of the declared enemies of orthodoxy are not the most exemplary for truth or integrity. However, granting that there be no such text in the *Alexandrine MS.* for my part, I should not scruple to abide by the universal testimony of all editions, in all countries, much rather than to give up myself implicitly to the authority of a single MS. I should think it much more reasonable to conclude, that the transcriber of that particular copy had through oversight, dropped some sentence, rather than to charge all the other copies with forgery, and the editions of all ages with a gross mistake. Consider not only the apparent difficulty, but the moral impossibility of corrupting the sacred books in that palpable manner, which this objection would insinuate, at a time when every private Christian valued them more than life, and spent no day without a diligent contemplation of them; at a time when each particular sect read them constantly in their public assemblies, and watched over the genuineness of each text with a most jealous eye. Would it be an easy matter to introduce a surreptitious clause into an ordinary will, after it had been solemnly proved at Doctor's Commons, and one authentic copy preserved in the archives? If this is scarce possible, how much more likely is it, that anyone should be able to practice so iniquitously upon the inspired writings, when not one only, but unnumbered copies were deposited in the most vigilant hands, and dispersed throughout the world.

HERVEY'S LETTERS.

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## THE SONGS OF HEZEKIAH.

*"The Lord was ready to save me : therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord."*—Isaiah xxxviii. 20.

## No. 1.

**T**HE son of one of the worst of men, we trace in Hezekiah one of the most illustrious instances of the sovereignty of grace. Never from so vile a root as Ahaz,—of whose abounding wickedness, in the time of his distress, the striking commentary of the Holy Spirit was, "This is that King Ahaz" 2 Chron. xxviii. 22,—could it have been imagined so gracious a descendant would have arisen. But thus, when things have come to their worst with His people, has the Lord usually brought about a change for the better, and in His loving kindness and tender mercy turned their captivity. Judah was reduced to the lowest depths of infamy, misery, and contempt, at home and abroad, through the persistency of Ahaz in profane idolatry—"for the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz King of Israel ; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord," ver. 19 : and Hezekiah appeared doomed to an heritage of ruin and woe when he ascended the throne.

In the calamities of their nation and day the spiritual elect of Abraham's natural seed had to largely participate : for God's chosen still share in national and local visitations. But not in the same way as the ungodly. The hand of the Lord on them is the hand of love ; and tender compassion regulates the course, and directs the issue, in all their portion of tribulation. Trouble is the believer's seed-time : deliverance the reaping of the harvest. While Ahaz ruled, Jehovah was not without His witnesses ; nor they without a few choice hearers, though the bulk of the nation was led by the vicious example of the monarch. Renowned Isaiah, and less known Oded (2 Chron. xxviii. 9), to speak of no others, delivered their messages in the ears of some whose hearts the Lord had touched, and their testimony bore fruit in the days of Ahaz's wise and honoured son. Just as in the vicious age of the Stuarts England was specially favoured with Puritan men of God, whose ill-requited labours, at the time, afterwards yielded fruit which remains to this day.



But it is not our wish to extend our observations on Hezekiah further than his "Songs" take us; and they will be found to occupy a wider sphere (if our judgment is correct) than is usually assigned to them by readers of Holy Scripture. These "Songs" we view as inspired compositions; of which, said the king, "We will sing them to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord," Isaiah xxxviii. 20. No other sort of compositions would have been deemed suitable for Jehovah's service in the sanctuary. As were David's, so must these have been, dictated by the Spirit of God, and approved as such by the priests and Levites. But shall we find them in the sacred canon? and if so, where? The book of the Psalms we believe contains them. But it is so usual to regard all that have no name attached (unless they carry palpable evidence on the surface of being subsequent to his day) as the compositions of David, that by this means judgment often errs, though the sweet truths set forth lose nothing of their sweetness and preciousness, when applied by the Holy Spirit to the heart, though their authors (or more properly their inspired agents) are unknown.

Four Psalms have been impressed on our mind as specially comprising those which Hezekiah calls, "My Songs." These are the cxv, cxvi, cxvii, and cxviii: and their very order as well as contents is in harmony with that conviction. They testify to the leading features of that king's day, his threatened overthrow by the most idolatrous power in the world; his deliverance; his zeal for the house of the Lord; his sickness; his restoration; his going up to the house of the Lord, and his joyful confidence in Jehovah's mercy. Some of the things he utters are just what we might assume to come from David; a few, in his depression, what Asaph might be thought to have penned. But the peculiar style of the whole indicates Hezekiah alone to have been the writer; and it will not be unprofitable to examine this.

We begin with the cxv. It begins with ascribing a glorious victory to the true and living God, and the disclaiming of all share in the same: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake," ver. 1. The destruction of Sennacherib's army by the blast of Jehovah's nostrils we accept here as intended to be acknowledged. And remembering the defiant words of Rabshakeh in the name of the

proud Assyrian monarch, and the scorn they had poured upon the God of Israel, and what had come of it, could any language be more forcible?—"Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens: HE HATH DONE WHATSOEVER HE HATH PLEASSED." Vers. 2, 3.

The powerlessness of the Assyrian idols in contrast with the vindicated majesty of Jehovah, is next referred to in the most deprecatory way: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not"—whereas the Lord had spoken and answered His afflicted servant's cry. "They have ears, but they hear not"—whereas Jehovah had heard the voice of him that blasphemed and reviled Him. "Noses have they, but they smell not"—whereas the Lord had smelled the sweet savour of the prayers addressed to Him. "They have hands, but they handle not"—whereas the Lord's right hand and holy arm had been made bare in the bringing into the dust of death and destruction the ruling power of the world. "Feet have they, but they walk not"—whereas the Lord had walked upon the wings of the wind in avenging His Israel and glorifying Himself. "Neither speak they through their throat"—whereas the voice of the Lord is powerful and full of majesty, and shakes the wilderness and breaks the cedars, and the Assyrian, like a lofty cedar, had been compelled to bow before it. And thus had the deluded and boasting idolaters been made to prove with respect to their idols that "they that made them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them," vers. 5-8—for Bel and Nebo alike had stooped before the might and majesty of Jehovah.

We may next perceive in the address to Israel what had been Hezekiah's desire for the repentance and reformation of the nation under his rule, including the restoration of Jehovah's worship: "O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: He is their help and their shield." Ver. 9. Israel had been a sink of idolatry, and fain would the king see her remain in firm allegiance with her God. Under Ahaz she had trusted for help to Assyria and her gods: now she is exhorted to trust for help and shield to Jehovah only. They had proved the difference between the false and the true, and Hezekiah desired there might be no more national apostacy. And seeing the priests and Levites of the tribe of Aaron were grossly involved in the idolatrous sins of the people, and needed to be

purified before they could properly attend to the ceremonial prescribed in the defiled temple, their monarch next appeals to them by the remembrance of this, saying, "O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: He is their help and their shield." Ver. 10.

It is a sorry account that is given in 2 Chron. xxix. of the condition of the priesthood in those times. Everything relating to Jehovah's worship had been so long in abeyance, nay more, thoroughly perverted, that sufficient priests could not be obtained for the slaying of the victims, and many of them were indifferent to the work; so that it is said, "the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests." Ver. 34. But the faith, zeal, and patience of Hezekiah had triumphed over all these impediments, and in His song he aims at confining "the house of Aaron" to their true position in relation to Divine worship. And in declaring the Lord to be their help and shield, he points out the true sense of their protection, supply and defence in every evil day, and as it had been witnessed in the downfall of Sennacherib and the destruction of his hosts.

Then in a more close and endearing way the gracious monarch looks around upon the spiritual "remnant according to the election of grace," such as they who obeyed His word, when his messengers to the different tribes to summon them to the first passover, were despised and mocked by the deeply corrupted and idolatrous infidels among them. 2 Chron. xxx. 10: "Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield," ver. 11. With these Hezekiah would of necessity feel the closest affinity. They in the strictest sense were his own people. Grace had brought him, the rich man, low, while it had exalted them. They had united with him in wrestling with the Lord for his deliverance in the evil day, and had rejoiced with him in beholding it. But they needed the exhortation in the future. And though trust is the fruit of faith, and faith is the work and operation of God, yet is the blessed Spirit pleased at times to work by the *inspired* exhortations in His Word, to trust in the Lord. Nor can we demur to the words of the poet:

"To trust Him endeavour, the work is His Own;

He makes the believer, and gives him his crown."

Sweetly does the good man revert to their past experience of Jehovah's covenant care; "The Lord *hath* been mindful of us."

Sweetly does he draw with apostolic clearness the influence that the past reflects to the future: "*He will bless us.*"

"Whom once He loves He never leaves,  
But loves unto the end."

The God of Israel is "without variableness, or shadow of turning." He will ever perfect His work; He will ever save to the uttermost. Past help will not suffice against future foes and perils; but it proclaims what shall be done for those who trust in the name of the Lord. And sweetly does the inspired king include all distinctions in his comforting words; "He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great," vers. 12, 13. In the deliverance from Egypt the "little ones" were specially named, Exod. x. 9, 10; so in their preservation in the wilderness, Num. xiv. 31: and the dear Saviour affirms of all who are such spiritually: "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish," Matt. xviii. 14. And thus does Hezekiah testify that the blessing, "even life for evermore," shall come on "the small" as well as "the great," on the feeble as well as the strong, who "fear the Lord," in all the fulness of its blessedness. For it is the new covenant mark; as the Lord hath said, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me," Jer. xxxii. 40. "The fear of the Lord is (therefore) to hate evil," Prov. viii. 13; and it "is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death," chap. xiv. 27. Thus in the evil days of Ahaz it wrought in God's remnant to preserve them from the popular course of evil, and when Hezekiah ascended the throne and purged the land and temple, they would be the most zealous in carrying out his and their Lord's pleasure. For them, therefore, the king has those "good words, and comfortable words," which proclaim them the subjects of future blessings.

The mind of Hezekiah appears next to revert to Jehovah's promise to Abraham, that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, and as the sand by the seashore innumerable. And while he noted how war and pestilence and famine had reduced the number of those he called "the remnant that was left," his words to them in the present Psalm are full of the confidence of faith and hope: "The Lord shall increase you more and more, you

and your children." The reason follows: "Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth," vers. 14, 15. The spiritual seed, those who were and are Jews inwardly, their circumcision being that of the heart, are all included in this sacred declaration. Zion shall never want for offspring. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." "For He" to whom this promise pertains, "shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." Of Him, heaven and earth's Maker, they are blessed. "Blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, being chosen in Him before the foundation of the world." Blessed with the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit, even the fear of the Lord, and destined to enjoy pardon, justification and peace, when the Comforter is pleased to deliver their sin-convinced souls from legal thralldom, doubts and fears. But we must revert to our points.

Hezekiah seems to indicate in the verse following the eternal supremacy of Jehovah, notwithstanding He may in His inscrutable wisdom be pleased to give possession of, and the rule and authority over the earth, to those who, like mighty Assyria's potentates, were but carnal children of fallen Adam: "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men,"—or "the sons of Adam," as the Hebrew reads. Ver. 16. And truly this is one of the greatest of mysteries, as it often involves the sorest trials, through their cruel oppression of the Lord's people. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece and Rome all bear witness to this. The great majority of those who "prosper in this world" and "increase in riches" are "the ungodly." Spreading themselves like a green bay tree they overshadow (not as protectors, but as tyrants) the Lord's poor and needy; and did not He to Whom both heaven and earth rightfully belong defend them, their lot would indeed be appalling.

But the king beholds the mighty ones of Assyria as having fallen, and by Jehovah's wrath, while he had escaped their sword and a fatal illness; and in the joyful remembrance he cries: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord," vers. 17, 18. For the

Assyrian dead, as for all who perish in their sins, "no praise" was in reserve in the mansions of bliss. The "silence," to which their proud hosts were hushed when the blast sent them to death, will never be broken by hallelujahs of triumph on their part. But the delivered ones, Hezekiah and the remnant who with him feared the Lord, could offer thanksgiving with joy. And from that "time forth," even through all the ages of time, while the dead in sin, and dead in perdition, know nothing of praising a God of grace, or a redeeming Christ, but are "silent in darkness," the Lord's Zion shall so opportunely receive His mercies, aid, and delivering grace, that their sackcloth shall be exchanged for gladness, their sighs shall be turned into songs, and their praises shall bless that covenant God Who hath blessed them for ever.

THE EDITOR.

*(To be continued).*

## THE KINGDOM AND ITS HEIRS.

May 28th, 1882.

My dear Friend,

**T**HE royal family are, by Divine appointment before all worlds, heirs of that kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter, which cannot be taken from them, and which they cannot be prevented from entering and finally possessing. 'Tis given them freely by Triune covenant settlements of love and grace, for their everlasting inheritance, and shall continue when all other kingdoms shall be no more. This was typed out in all the Lord's sovereign dealings with His people of old, therefore said the man of God, Joshua, "Thou art a great people, and hast great power, thou shalt not have one lot only." The dignity, safety, felicity, and all the unspeakable bliss and joys of heaven, with that eternal weight of inconceivable glory, arising out of the good-will and righteousness of Jehovah, treasured up in Emmanuel for all the Lord's chosen and redeemed people, consist in their eternal union to, and everlasting standing in, Christ Jesus their Lord, Whom Jehovah hath before all worlds appointed heir of all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. O sweet, soul-comforting, God-glorifying mystery of free, sovereign, and unmerited goodness, love and grace! Hence the greatness of all that fear God. They are loved with an everlasting love of Father, Son, and Spirit: as it is written: "The Lord appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I (Jehovah in covenant) have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore (according to covenant engage-

ments which cannot be broken) with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

Hence the family cry of all the King's children, in their longings after their Lord's smiles and heart-cheering presence. Here is Divine power, human beauty, complex excellency, incarnate attraction, with odoriferous delights, by which our adored Ishi allures His bride from the love of terrestrial objects and subjects, brings her into the wilderness, speaks comfortably unto her heart, and assures her of His unequalled, unchanging love to her: the response of which is from her very soul by the energy of the Spirit, "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth." The church in all her individual members implores her Lord to embrace her, with kisses in the plural. O yes, daily, and every day; for she is taught of Him to feel and say, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison with Thee.") "For Thy love is infinitely better than wine," or all the good things thou canst bestow on me in this life. "Because of the savour of Thy good ointments, Thy name" (that is, all that our Lord is to us, in the exceeding greatness and infiniteness of His person, in His offices, characters, relations) "Thy name is as ointment poured forth,"—in all the gracious purposes of Jehovah, in all the blessings of eternal redemption, in all the promises of God, in all the doctrines of His precious Gospel, in all the unctuous operations of the Holy Ghost, and in thy everlasting kindness in saving thy whole church in Thee with an everlasting salvation. "Therefore do the virgins love Thee," and in spirit pray, "Draw me, we will run after Thee."

O the infinite blessedness of an union to Christ! This when made known and revealed to the mind by the Holy Ghost, brings the soul into the unspeakably sweet and great privilege of communion with God, in the liberty and holy freedom of sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, to see and enjoy that which the highest attainments of the sons of pride in the vanity of life are total strangers to. The Lord causes His dear children highly to prize, and with tenderness of conscience, gratitude of heart, in humbleness and meekness of spirit, to walk in their new-birth privileges with delight; for the wisdom, riches, and greatness of this dying world, are vanity and foolishness with God. And so the regenerate child of God shall find it, when he, through indwelling corruption and temptation, sets his heart upon it. This is not his lot, his rest, or his portion. O may these make to themselves wings and fly away. But Christ the Lord is his portion, his rock, and his refuge. This, believer, is thy greatness: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." All besides is death, for it is written: "He taketh the wise (in their own esteem) in their own craftiness." And again: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise,

at they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come (promised and prayed for), all are (now, in the mind of the Lord) yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Lord, increase our faith, that the comfort be ours also, with a knowledge of Thee; that our delights be more abundantly in and from Thee; that we love, worship, adore, bless and praise Thee, Who art the Lord of hosts, "a crown of glory, a adiem of beauty" unto all Thy blood-washed, redeemed people, and receive "a Spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and strength to them that turn the battle to the gate." Lord Jesus! may we, by the sweet energy of the blessed Spirit, in the contemplation of Thee, our God, King, Kinsman, Redeemer, and Saviour, triumph over Thee at all times. Thou, Lord, hast said, that without Thee we can do nothing. This, through Thy grace, we feel, therefore, again we implore Thy much needed and kindly-promised strength.

Yours affectionately in Jesus,

A SILENT ONE.

Mr. Pepper.

## DAVID MY SERVANT SHALL BE KING OVER THEM."

Ezekiel xxxvii. 24.

Take the harp and the tabret, ye freed men, and sing!  
 Go forth in the dance to meet David your king!  
 Sing out of your heart with melodious voice  
 Till the wastes of the earth and the mountains rejoice.  
 His goodness declare, and His mercy proclaim,  
 And honour your mighty Deliverer's name.  
 For He comes! By His scars and the blood of His slain,  
 He cometh with vengeance, He cometh to reign.  
 All hail, Thou Desire of all nations! Oppressed,  
 Discomfited, wearied, we long for Thy rest.  
 Dear Dayspring of freedom, and concord, and peace,  
 The light of Thy Advent shall bring us release  
 From the darkness of sin, from its thralldom and weight:  
 From the night-owls men worship as holy and great.  
 Shine on us, O Love! Smile on us, O Grace!  
 Come fill, and o'erflow us, enfold and embrace.  
 Let the light of Thy beauty encircle our brow—  
 Our wisdom, our judgment, our diadem Thou.  
 In Thy secret, sweet influence come as the dew,  
 The feeble to strengthen, transform, and renew.



May the least be as David, and hasten the hour,  
 The noon of Thy splendour, Thy seven-fold power,  
 When the nations shall learn and acknowledge Thy ways,  
 And the earth be an altar of incense and praise.  
 O burnish us all into arrows of light—  
 Our battle-bow Thou, and our quiver of might ;  
 Then on the bright heaven of Thy majesty ride,  
 And wear us as arrows of truth by Thy side,  
 To pierce to the centre and quicken to life  
 The hearts of the children of malice and strife.

The Nursery,  
 Near East Hoathly.

C. H. M.

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### PERSONAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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#### OUR JUBILEE MEMORIAL.

37, New Kent Road, S.E., July 9th, 1882.

Dear Sir,—It did truly do my heart good when I read of the Lord's goodness to you at your jubilee meeting. May peace and unity exist to the end of your days amongst you and your flock. But I said to myself, I can give him nothing. But I am enabled at times to think of you to the Lord, when the blessed Spirit brings you and others of God's sent servants before me: and I do beg Him to keep you all faithful to His Word, and preserve your lives to sound aloud His fame and Name for many years to come, if His blessed will; for true trumpeters are scarce now-a-days. Oh, what blasphemy is being spread abroad; most lamentable to think of. My poor prayer is to the dear Lord to make and keep His own people honest and true to their colours. "If Baal be God, serve him," I say. "If God be God, serve Him," with mind and heart, fully and unmixed. For

" 'Tis perfect poverty alone  
 That sets the soul at large."

True liberty. I know that our God knows all that is taking place; for not the smallest thing could take place without His permission; at the same time I think it calls upon God's people to be on their watch-tower, and to cry aloud to Him, for the abominable sins that are done in the land, and to spare this our guilty nation. I almost say sometimes to myself, "Would to God there was a little persecution going on among His people, that it might stir them up," for I cannot but think that the Church of Christ is in a very low spot, and real vital religion at a low ebb. It is with grief that I say it. But, dear sir, forgive me if I am wrong, God's power alone is wanting; that is everything to a child of God.

A SPARROW ALONE.

## A KIND WORD FROM OLD PILGRIMS.

Fareham, July 10th, 1882.

To my very dear Brother in Christ,—Being rather shaky this morning, but having a desire to write to one whose face I have never seen in the flesh, yet having read the *Advocate* some years, and having received grace for the obedience of faith in some small measure, by the same Spirit which worketh by love to you and the brethren, I am desirous you should know, by the above books, I have, with my dear aged sister, felt greatly instructed, settled and established concerning soul matters, therefore I feel deeply indebted to God, in thus raising you up at such a time of dearth of hearing the gospel, when the work and operation of the Spirit is so little insisted upon as the ground of all spiritual teaching tending to confirm and establish all that are wavering and halting between two opinions. Yet how great the mercy to come to an establishment in doctrine, principle and experience, and especially to feel the power of God leading us into the practical and essential feeling of Titus ii. 11 to the end, which St. Paul so prefixed in all his epistles,—with “grace, mercy and peace be with you, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus, that in every thing ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you (1 Cor. i.)

Dear Sir, please to receive the enclosed letter we have received from our much beloved friend and brother Mr. Hammond, with very many thanks to God for mercy received by him and many friends in hearing and answering prayer on his behalf.

We are, dear Sir, yours in bonds of love and union in Spirit,

G. OAKSHOTT,

M. A. GREEN.

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## Letters by the Household of Faith.

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LETTER BY RUTH BRYAN.

Good-Friday Morning.

How did my soul at breakfast dissolve in Psalm xxii, especially the first part. Never did I see and feel so fully before how our precious Head and Husband agonized under *unanswered petitions*; how He looked at others who were delivered and seemed to feel less and lower than all. Oh, He is a precious companion in tribulation; having suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted; having suffered being deserted, He can feel with those

who feel alone ; and having felt the anguish of being unanswered, He can walk and talk with those who are saying, " Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God." Oh, He is *wonderful wherever* we find Him, and His bosom is a precious resting-place wherever we may be. May we *consider Him* to-day, and be let into the depths of His suffering love, and sit beneath that solemn cross,

" Where Jesus' blood in rivers flowed  
For love of worthless me."

Rivers of love and blood drown mountains of guilt ; and *prostrate into* nothingness, the abominable monster SELF. Its high towers can never rise in atoning blood, for Christ is all and in all.

" I'd creep beside Him like a worn,  
And see Him die for me."

He said, " It is finished !" of the work and penal suffering, but He will *never* say it is finished of the love and the glory ; and therefore the tide keeps rolling in afresh when we seem to have got to the lowest low water. Mark !—I know not how to leave off,

I am yours, in the once-suffering Lamb,—Amen.

R. B.

[One word on the expression "*unanswered*," as applied by beloved Ruth to some of the Saviour's petitions. She was too sound to imply that her Beloved ever offered a prayer not according to the Father's *will*, and hence received no approving reply : for this would invalidate the perfection of the Redeemer's work and intercession, and oppose His own words to the Father, " I know that thou hearest Me always." All dear Ruth intends is an *apparent* or *seemingly delayed* reply.—THE EDITOR.]

#### A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. OXENHAM.

Guildford, March 14th, 1840.

My afflicted distressed sister in the Lord,—What shall I say to thee in answer to thy sorrowful epistle. That thou art in the footsteps of the flock is manifest, for the like affliction and sorrow was felt by the patriarch Jacob, who said, respecting his children, " Ye will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." But mark the patriarch's end when on his dying bed, he said, " I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord," drew up his feet in the bed, and entered his eternal rest.

Many have been the trials and afflictions of my sister ; but hitherto the Lord hath helped her ; and although no affliction is joyous, but rather grievous ; yet they are amongst the " all things " that *shall* (not *may*) work together for our good.

I know by sad and painful experience the answer. My poor unbelieving heart hath replied, " But how can this or that distressing event work for good ?" Blind carnal reason cannot reconcile these things with the word of promise, and well did Mr. Hart express it :—

“ Could we see how all were right,  
Where were room for credence?  
But by faith, and not by sight,  
Christians yield obedience.”

I can feel for and sympathise with you; and my prayer shall be that the God Who hath fed thee all thy life long, and Who hath manifested His love to thee in Christ, and given thee amidst all thy fears, trials and afflictions, a good hope through grace, will support, comfort, and strengthen thee by His Spirit in the inner man; and depend upon it, when thou arrivest at thy Father's house, (and the time cannot be far off), thou wilt look back at thy journey through this wilderness, and say, “ My God and Saviour hath done all things well.”

Paul, who had suffered cold, hunger and nakedness, yet says, “ these *light afflictions*.” Yet how often have you and I called them heavy? O for Paul's faith to look beyond this vale of tears, and realise some of the blessedness of the saints above. This is done not by looking on “ *things temporal*,” for they are too often miserable; but by looking to things “ *Eternal*,” and trusting on the faithfulness, love and power of our most kind God and Saviour.

Hath not God delivered my sister in six troubles? Will He not in the seventh? Yes, surely, for He hath in faithfulness said, “ I will bring you through fire and water;” and that “ neither life nor death, nor things present (however dark and distressing), nor things to come,” be they what they may, shall ever separate us—poor, sinful, unworthy us—from His love.

Our Sister Holloway hath long been tried by an afflicted tabernacle. If still in the body give my kindest Christian love to her, as by your account she will soon reach her eternal home.

The poor woman's afflictions have not been her family, but a frail tabernacle; but all must have a cross to take up and carry. Our forefather's motto was: “ No cross, no crown.” Who would therefore in their right mind, but act the part of Moses?—“ choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,” which must end in eternal death. Cheer up, therefore, my sister; a few more trials and then we'll bid an eternal adieu to sin and sorrow.

Dame unites in love to you, Mrs. Seest, and all our Christian friends, with your brethren.

THOS. OXENHAM.

P.S.—Whether we shall be able to take a journey in May, I must leave. I think I informed you in my last that I was suffering from influenza, which hath so weakened my voice that I cannot engage in family prayer, and have but faint hopes of ever speaking again in public.

My partner took it of me, and is now suffering from a great deal of fever and debility, but hope the means may be blest to her recovery. Whether our friends the Dunkites are alive we know not, having no tidings from them since Christmas, to whom, Mr. Parsons, and friends at Lewes, &c., &c., give our Christian love. Farewell.

### LETTER BY MARY LEVITT.

Hull, February 7th, 1872.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, our unchangeable Friend, Father, Judge, and Saviour. In Him I trust, on Him I depend, and unto Him I look, and on Him cast all my care, well knowing that I am safe in His hand. I have long since ceased from man whose breath is in his nostrils. There was a time in my experience when I thought *too much* of a *man*, a servant of the Most High God. I thought him infallible, but God shewed me my mistake, and I had some very severe discipline. Only God knows the heavy trial I had to pass through. The lessons I then learnt are not forgotten, nor ever will be. They are not to learn over again now when I am old and have other troubles: no, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. We must take up our cross and follow Christ, through evil report and good report. I have always found *His grace sufficient*. I know that "all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose." In the world we must have tribulation; but Jesus says, "in Me ye shall have peace." As you truly observe, "great peace have they who love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Oh, no, we *rise above everything*,

"And sing the Lamb that once was slain,  
And shout His endless praise."

I was very pleased to read our brother's letters; I often wondered we never heard from him. I wish I could have been with you all on Monday, but you had my heart with you. He gave me good advice in his letter; but my Lord had been before him and settled the matter. My mind was made up to be still, and leave it all with God, while I watched and looked on. The angel will work wondrously:—

"Forward, then, with courage go,  
Long we shall not dwell below,  
Soon the joyful news will come,  
Child, your Father calls, Come Home."

My few remaining days will soon be numbered; my sorrows will soon be over; and I shall be beyond the reach of all my foes, both external and internal—

"Where flesh and sin no more control  
The sacred pleasures of the soul."

"The Lord knoweth them that are His," and He will take care of them and bring them to the desired Haven, where they would be. *Nothing can hurt God's children.* It may trouble them for a time, and try their faith and patience; but God *overrules* all for their good. I generally carry my troubles to the Lord. I know He will undertake for me. He has always been my Helper, and He will be to the end; "so henceforth let no man trouble me, for I have the mark of the Lord Jesus." I have had these words sounding in my ears very loud many days and nights: "*If they cry at all unto Me I will surely hear their cry.*" That's enough I said,—

"I'll cast my burden on the Lord,  
And lean upon HIS FAITHFUL WORD."

It is very blessed to have applications of the Word: first one passage of Scripture and then another floats in my mind. God talks with us by His Word, both in public and private, and we love to hear Him.

"With Him I daily love to talk,  
Of Him my soul delights to talk."

I do not want to contend with bad spirits, there is no profit to my soul. I cannot live upon dust, I want to be praising God and living upon the best things. Nothing short of God can satisfy me. Well now, my dear sister, let us rejoice together, for the Lord hath done great things for us and great things in us. Unto Him be glory, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever, Amen.

With my best love to you, and all my Christian friends around you,

Believe me,

Dear Mrs. Machin,

Yours in sincerity and truth, in the bond that cannot be broken.

MARY LEVITT.

## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

THE LORD'S DESIGN IN HIS PEOPLE'S AFFLICTIONS.—For your comfort consider four things: 1. God's aim in your afflictions is not destruction, but trial; as gold is put into the furnace to be fined, not consumed. Wicked men's misery is "an evil, and an only evil," Ezek. vii. 5. In their cup there is no mixture, and their plagues are not to fan, but destroy. But to godly men, miseries have another property and habitude: Dan. xi. 35, "They shall fall to try, and to purge, and to make white;" that is, in times of many persecutions, as was that of Antiochus, the figure of antichrist. 2. The time of trial is appointed, Dan. xi. 35: "They shall fall to try, and to purge, and to make white, even to the time of the end, because it is yet for a time appointed." You are not in the furnace by chance, or at the will of your enemies; the

time is appointed, set by God. 3. God sitteth by the furnace prying and looking after His metal, Mal. iii. 3: "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." It notes His constant and assiduous care that the fire be not too hot, that nothing be spilt and lost. It is a notable expression, that of Isa. xlviii. 9, 10: "For My praise will I refrain; I have refined thee, but not as silver;" that is, not so thoroughly. Silver or gold is kept in the fire till the dross be wholly wrought out of it. If we should be fined as silver, when should we come out of the furnace. Therefore God saith He will "choose us in the furnace," though much dross still remain. 4. Consider this trial is not only to *approve* but to *improve*; we are tried as gold, refined when tried. So 1 Peter i. 7, "That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth:" or more clearly in Job xxiii. 10, "When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." The drossy and scorious part or matter is severed, and the corruptions that cleave close to us are purged and eaten out.

MANTON.

THE SURE FOUNDATION.—What is the foundation of the Christian's hope? Not innate moral excellence; not enlarged and critical knowledge of the sacred text; not punctual discharge of relative duties; not diligent use of the ordinances of religion; not sacraments, nor fastings, nor prayer, nor almsgiving; not forced progress in the way of holiness; not past excitement, nor present peace and enlargement of heart; not visions, nor graces, nor expediences, —these do not constitute the foundation of the Christian's hope. Of some of these, his judgment is that of Paul,—'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.' Of others he makes the lawful, the scriptural, the believing use; while the language of his unfeigned self-renunciation ever is, 'Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.' That Rock is Christ. To expand the ideas condensed in that one word, 'Christ,'—the foundation of the Christian's hope is the promise of Jehovah, recorded in His Word, confirmed by His oath, ratified by the blood of the everlasting covenant, evidenced by the resurrection, secured by the ascension of Jesus, and revealed to the hearts of His chosen by the Spirit of His grace.—*The late Bishop of Carlisle.*

Co-WORKERS.—"My Father worketh hitherto and I work"—all things, past, present, and to come. If He created it so did I. If He hath governed the affairs of it, so have I: My hands have wielded the sceptre with Him, and God never did anything without My advice and counsel.' These things were so stupendously strange that they made the carnal Jew wild and mad. GOODWIN.

## ESSAYS ON HART'S HYMNS.—LVI.

## HYMN 52.

*Praying for Relations.*

**N**OT the least excellency displayed by Mr. Hart in his hymns is the variety of subjects introduced. Doctrinal, experimental, and practical themes, are all handled in a Scriptural manner, and that Religion which Arminians stigmatize as narrow, is made to exhibit a *breadth*, as world-wide as the Gospel sanctions. It is an utterly false charge against those who vitally believe in the sovereign freeness and discrimination of Grace, that, accounting themselves God's elect, they care nothing or little about others. It is, on the other hand, very true, that they are often willing to take favourable views of those who are bound to themselves by the ties of relationship, which they would not do in the case of strangers. Every believer must at times be conscious of this ; and equally so, that the Lord, Who "seeth not as man seeth," will not endorse his flesh opinions.

Grace and nature are essentially diverse; and yet they often seem to assimilate. Like two river-streams, arising in opposite directions, they may in their course incline at certain points in a parallel, but they speedily branch off again, to meet, perhaps, no more till they are lost in the ocean's fulness. This is noticeable in the family history of all the Lord's people in Holy Writ. Abraham would have Ishmael live before his God. Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison : and David loved with inordinate fondness his Absalom : doubtless because of his handsome person. That all these gracious men, including Eli and Samuel with their ungodly sons, prayed earnestly and often on their behalf, there can be no doubt : but in each case it was Natural Affection, not the Spirit of God that prompted their petitions. And yet, remembering that it was a personal sense of the need of mercy that led them to plead for its extension by the Lord to their offspring, and that that personal sense of need arose from the operations of grace within them, it is not easy to draw a clear line between the two influences. Love is the essence of vital religion, and relative affection is inseparable from natural feelings. And when persons have passed through much exercise about their own souls, and know something



of "the terror of the Lord," in His infinite holiness and wrath against sin; when they have learnt "Except a man be born again he cannot see (nor 'enter into') the kingdom of God; and that an interest in the blood that cleanseth from all sin is indispensable to eternal salvation, it would be strange indeed if they felt no concern for the souls of those united to them by the close bonds of natural affinity; as wife, husband, father, mother, parent, child, and even wider branches of relationship. But let us follow our esteemed poet:

"Kind souls, who for the miseries moan  
Of those who seldom mind their own;  
But treat your zeal with cold disdain,  
Resolved to make your labour vain;

You whose sincere affection tends  
To help your dear, ungrateful friends,  
That think you mad, or foes, or fools,  
Because you fain would save their souls." Vers. 1, 2.

Very homely is this address; but the subject admitted of no finely spun phraseology. It is a picture of every-day life in the social circle, where God has by His Holy Spirit "made to differ" one or more from the rest of the family. A barrier is thus erected between that warm intercourse of a carnal nature that formerly existed, and the Saviour's words are verified: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? Suppose ye that I am come to send peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Luke xii. 49, 51-53. And most painful and distressing is this "division" to all. On the part of the separated it calls forth grief, that those who are left are so blind and dead to their danger. On the part of the latter it provokes hatred and hostility, both in words and deeds.

As we write this our memory goes back to the period when the Lord singled us out and implanted His fear in our heart. What a revolution it wrought in our family circle! An excellent relative with whom we were placed in business, and who had even shown

the kindness of a father (in the place of the one we had lost in infancy), instantly became excited with the strongest antipathy, and great was the tax upon faith and patience. Nor does the believer always shine in the encounters that take place—at least, we know we did not. Driven to despair by the wrath of God in the conscience; held fast in legal bonds, and nearly at our wits' end by awful suggestions—the fiery darts of the wicked, little could we endure the reproaches, taunts, oaths, and curses that were often showered upon us. Often were we betrayed into hasty and angry retorts; and as often did the fears of death and hell increase upon us, as Satan turned on us as accuser, and the law in its holy terribleness denounced our imperfection. But when the Holy Spirit brought us into an experience of Christ's salvation, and bade the Tempter flee, all was changed. We could then in the Spirit, and under the power of our Redeeming Master, bear with ease what was before intolerable, and pray for him who had spitefully used and persecuted us. Nor can this ever be done in a legal spirit. From Christ the "sweet fruit of the lips is found;" both that which is yielded to God in praise and prayer, and extended to men, in rendering blessing for cursing, and kindness for injury.

Full of zeal at the beginning of their spiritual career, many (if not most) of the Lord's people,—forgetful of their own indebtedness to grace for their own regeneration and conversion—foolishly imagine that they have but to speak to, and exhort those they love, and they will bring them to feel and see as they do. Fond delusion! They will also venture to "cast their pearls" (the secret sweets they are favoured with) before those who prove to be "swine;" and who "trample" the jewels by their ridicule "under their feet," and turn again and rend them with blasphemous speeches. This is hard fare; but it is needful, that the truth may appear in all its rich lustre that "the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us." However ardent, loving, persevering be the appeals of the children of God to those they love in the flesh, "until the Spirit be poured from on high," the wilderness will remain a wilderness, and their hearers will

"Think *them* mad, or foes, or fools,

Because *they* fain would save their souls."

"*Mad*"—because they have quitted what, to a worldly eye, seem to be substantial things, for what are regarded as the vain prospects

of an unseen and unknown Future. "*Foes*"—because they stand in the way of, and oppose and rebuke the course of unbridled lusts and pleasures pursued by the votaries of fashion and iniquity. "*Fools*"—because there appears no sense or reason in "the mystery of the faith" they profess—"for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness"—and because they (*i.e.* believers) attribute great importance to what the world accounts but as trifling matters in the way of speaking and acting.

We need not say much on the words

"Because you fain would save their souls."

It is a phrase in accordance with Paul's, "If by any means I might save some," Rom. xi. 14; and James', "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," chap. v. 20. Salvation, as here spoken of, has no reference to creature merit, or efficiency; but exclusively to instrumentality. God's only Agent in merit is Christ, with His blood and righteousness; His only Agent in efficiency is the Holy Spirit, with His regenerating power. But man becomes an *instrumental* agent in the Spirit's hands. Yet in the small manner of success—so far as the range of man's efforts are extended—in proportion to his failures, all God-taught men will prove *instrumentality*, of itself, simply means *inefficiency*. It is the earthen vessel without the heavenly treasure. It is the trumpet, without the living breathing through it. It is the sword, without the potent hand wielding it. And it only proclaims the truth of Christ's words: "Without Me ye can do nothing." And hence in the opposition offered to the most disinterested and loving efforts there is cause for self-humiliation before the Lord, and more *dependent* appeals to Him in the face of all discouragement. And it is this Mr. Hart counsels:

"Though deaf to every warning giver,  
They scorn to walk with you to heaven,  
But often think, and sometimes say,  
They'll never go, if that's the way;"

"Though they the Spirit of God resist,  
Or ridicule your faith in Christ;  
Though they blaspheme, oppose, contemn,  
And hate you for your love to them.

“One secret way is left you still,  
To do them good against their will :  
Here they can no obstruction give ;  
You may do this without their leave.

“ Fly to the throne of grace by prayer,  
And pour out all your wishes there ;  
Effectual, fervent prayer prevails  
When every other method fails.”

Vers. 3-6.

The tears and declaration of Christian when summoned to go on pilgrimage made no sufficient impression on his wife and children to induce them to accompany him. Bunyan understood this, and so did Hart. And so does every godly parent. “Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death ;” and until He works “vain is the help of man.” In the wider connexions of relationship, to which reference has already been made, and in which the subjective state of children to the parents’ will (which often curbs what would otherwise break forth into serious displays of animosity) has no influence, there is freedom of speech in reviling frequently indulged in ; although in every instance where grace encounters carnality the words equally apply : “The carnal mind is enmity against God : for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Rom. viii. 7. The godly parent may watch with aching heart and tearful eyes the sullen determination, visible on the face of some of his children, to break loose as soon as possible from what they deem *religious constraint*. The services at family worship and in the sanctuary of God are tolerated with ill-conceived dislike and mortification : for they see no beauty in the Saviour that they should desire Him. To them, as to the Jews, He is “a root out a dry ground.” And in every case in which open opposition is offered to the read, expounded, and proclaimed word of God, both young and old

“The Spirit of God resist :”

for it is then *His* testimony, and not man’s words that they rise up against. And how utterly the reverse is their state to that of theirs who are poor and of a contrite spirit, and tremble at His word. Isa. lxvi. 2. O it is a blessed sight to see a holy reverence manifested in young persons for the Scriptures : such as that shown by our Edward VI. when he rebuked a companion for placing a bible on a chain to enable him to reach a shelf beyond

his height. Whoever fears the Lord can never lightly tamper with or gainsay His truth in Holy Writ.

But supposing it is so, that such as have ungodly relations whose eternal welfare is close to their heart, are rebuffed and reviled on every occasion they venture to approach them on the hated subject of religion: What then? "*The throne of grace*" remains. There sits enthroned the Mighty Conqueror of Satan, sin and world; "exalted a Prince and a Saviour" to give "repentance and the forgiveness of sins." Let Him in this "*secret way*" be appealed to. The captains in the Holy War failed, and were compelled by petition to invoke the personal aid of Emmanuel. He acceded to their requests, and thus they prevailed. This is how all believers must act. Nor daunted, nor silenced by the working of Satan in those about whose salvation they are concerned, they must only the more exclusively look to Him Who is "mighty to save" and pour out their hearts before Him. True; He may not see fit in every instance to grant them their requests. Their hearts may be fixed where the Lord's is not. They may be praying for them for whom Jesus did not pray. They may will what Jehovah wills not. They may be uttering desires which the Holy Spirit does not prompt. But they must be gainers and not losers by their supplications. Ishmael was blessed and Esau too, *providentially*, for their fathers' sakes, even though they had not Isaac and Jacob's *spiritual* portion. And the Lord thus often hears prayer on behalf of a godly man's relatives when He does not save their souls. But forasmuch as His secret purpose is unknown, and can only be known by His Own development of it, let all believers urge their suit, hoping against hope, and remembering,

"Effectual fervent prayer prevails  
When every other method fails."

THE EDITOR.

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### "THE WAY OF LIFE."

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. FALKNER.

No. 6.

Dear Friend,

It has pleased God to give you some foretaste of His heavenly kingdom, by making known to you the way of life; giving you to taste that He is gracious, and making manifest something of His everlasting love to your soul, which doth beget in you a true desire

of enjoying more of the same. This can only satisfy you ; for we can never love God, or desire to have fellowship with Him, only as we are led to taste that He is gracious. The desire of the spouse in the Canticles was, that God would draw her, then she could run. There is no running but by the Spirit's drawing. There is no joy in hope, or in faith, but under the droppings of the Father's love. The true drawings of the Father's love are manifest in the heart by producing true desires after Him, by being led to the throne of grace ; there experiencing the influence of the Spirit, as the Spirit of prayer, enabling the soul to unbosom all its wants before the Lord ; enlightening the soul in the knowledge of Christ ; manifesting His name to be precious to the soul ; setting forth the glorious fulness of the Father's love as displayed in the merits of His dear Son, and creating a true desire of a personal enjoyment of these saving benefits in the soul. Now as the true light of Christ beaming from Him as the Sun of Righteousness dispels the dark clouds out of the human mind, rends the veil of ignorance from the understanding, and makes us delight in the Lord, so the receiving of Christ, the embracing Him, and trusting to Him, manifests our safety. Experience in Him makes us happy, and all the glorious fulness of His merits will be increasingly opening to our view ; our interest in them will be continually unfolding to our souls by the blessed Spirit, Who will be ever testifying of Jesus to us. This will be the joy of faith till we shall experience all joy and peace in believing, which will prove a death blow to unbelief ; the worst enemy we can have in our own house. May it be your happy experience to believe on Him Who justifieth the ungodly.

The people of God in all ages have been a tried people. It is "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God ;" and this hath been the constant experience of the church of Christ. The Lord in His providence has seen fit to place them in such straits and difficulties that none but Himself could deliver them ; and all for the advancement of His own glorious grace, and the good of His chosen, that He might teach them to trust Him in the most trying circumstances, and so might learn to live by faith upon His faithful word of promise. Wherever the Lord gives grace He is pleased to try it—often in the furnace. "Everyone whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." And sometimes under these exercises we are ready to call in question whether the Lord is for us, or against us ? But, blessed be His name, He has promised to deliver us, and He is faithful to His promise ; which I will endeavour to show you, by bringing such testimony from the word of God as may be a ground of confidence to enable you, in all your troubles, to trust in the Lord.

In the first place, I wish you to take notice of the history of Joseph, where you will find the hand of God from his first dream to the fulfilment thereof, and so on to the conclusion of the history. Secondly, the singular account of Moses, from his birth to his death. Thirdly, read the account of the carrying of the Jewish nation into the Babylonish captivity. Fourthly, observe the death of Haman, how the Lord brought it about, and the preservation of the Jews from the dark and devilish designs of their enemies. My desire in referring you to these accounts is, to show you what the Lord can do for His people in a sovereign way: His power ruleth over all, and He holds the hearts and hands of all men, turning them whither He will. In the next place, I wish to call your attention to the means by which the Lord brings about such great deliverances, and that by His providence, bringing His people into such straits that His hand may be conspicuously seen. All they have to do is, to carry their troubles to a throne of grace, and lay them before the Lord, looking only to Him for deliverance. This you find was the conduct of the children of Israel at the Red Sea. They cried to the Lord, and He heard and delivered them, and destroyed their enemies. He was with them in the cloud—in the pillar—in the manna—in the rock—and in the brazen serpent; and so with them till they obtained the land promised to them many hundred years before. "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Look again at the three children in the fiery furnace, where they had only to look to God by prayer, and the Lord was with them by His personal presence to preserve and comfort them, and to destroy their enemies. You find Daniel in the same state making his prayer three times a day unto the Lord, and his perfect safety in the lion's den. Many other instances might be found of the Lord's singular deliverance of His people in a way of providence, but the great blessings He has manifested in a way of grace will be a greater encouragement to you to take all your wants to the Lord, even the worst of all your thoughts, words, and ways; entering into His presence only in the merits of Christ Jesus, our alone Saviour, having your eye fixed on that only sacrifice for our sins. Paul, the jailer, and the three thousand who were pricked in the heart, all cried to the Lord, and He heard their cry, and delivered them in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Manasseh being in sore trouble cried unto the Lord, and He saved him. David, after his fall, cried to the Lord for a fresh sense of His pardoning love to be manifested to him. Hezekiah withstood the Lord's prophet Isaiah, and looked only to the Lord (by prayer) who cured his body, and cast all his sins behind His back. Rebel Jonah cried out of the

belly of the fish, where the Lord put him, for the encouragement of His church in their hopeless state to cry to Him.

John encourages us to come with all our sins, and tells us for our comfort, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin (mark, *all* sin), and Who stands as an advocate before God to plead the cause of all the church and to maintain its efficacy in the conscience. This blood is our discharge before God by way of merit, that we may know the preciousness of the blood of Christ. The ground of all my hope and confidence is from those blessed manifestations of God to my soul in answer to prayer: whether I look at the sinful state which my soul was in, without any possible way of escape to my view, or the many difficulties in providence, or my bodily infirmities, or those various temptations that I have experienced; and I can truly say, that God in Christ Jesus is my only refuge; in prayer depending alone upon Him; looking up to Him for all; having no stock in hand, but what daily comes from Him; and, blessed be God, He has never failed me to the present moment. With respect to what I have to say in the way of preaching, the Lord is pleased to keep me altogether dependent upon Him, and I hope and trust He ever will, that I may be continually weak in myself, and that the strength of God may be manifest. This weakness in hearing I learned many years ago, and by it I was taught to look only to the Lord for the power in which I stand. I hope the Lord will teach you to cease from all men, in the best of whom there is no dependence; but in Him there is everlasting safety. Look up to the fountain, Christ, till you can go from Christ to the spring-head set up in God's eternal love to your soul before the world began; there you will find an overflowing spring of life to the joy and comfort of your heart. If you say, the troubles I have barely hinted at, are the least of your present trials, keep this by you till you have more of them! Then you will find the throne of grace will be your only refuge, and by observing your daily mercies which the Lord will be pleased to bestow, you will be encouraged to go to Him for more. In this way the Holy Spirit will be pleased to lead you on to a life of faith, in which the word of God, the promises contained therein, with the sweet invitations manifested to your soul, will be encouragement for you to trust in Him Who cannot lie to any that come to Him. Take notice, that the oath of God is made for the comfort of those that fly to the refuge Christ Jesus alone.

Elizabeth Keene is no more as to this life. I spoke from the last clause in the 54th verse of the 15th chapter of the Corinthians twice on the Lord's Day. Accept best respects.


From yours, in Christ Jesus, N. F.

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## THE FIRST CLAIM.

*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*—Matt. vi. 33.

N the above words we have a most solemn admonition, followed by a very precious promise; but we daily prove our inability of ourselves to take heed to the exhortation, to give the "first" place to the things of God. Such is the natural tendency of our hearts to turn aside from Him, that we require constant discipline to keep us seeking the kingdom of God "first." We are so apt to be "cumbered with much serving," to be careful and troubled about many things appertaining to this life, to be drawn aside by the things of the world; and when this is the case, as a natural consequence, we become lean in our souls, slothful in Divine things, and unfruitful.

Let us consider a little what it is to place a thing "first"—the wide range it involves: "first," not merely occasionally, but always and constantly "first." Thus, if we are enabled to follow the exhortation to "seek first the kingdom of God," our first thoughts on awaking in the morning will ascend to Him for help; that He will grant us His Holy Spirit to teach, lead, and guide us into all truth; that He will enable us to cleave to Him with full purpose of heart, and grant us a daily growth in grace and in the knowledge of Him. Whatever we undertake, our first thought will be for the blessing of God upon it, and in all our actions we shall desire His Spirit to lead us and teach us in the way He would have us go. We shall prayerfully seek to Him for grace and strength to resist all that is evil, or even that which has "the appearance of evil." Our one great desire will be to honour and glorify our good and gracious God, Who has raised us to a hope in His mercy.

"First," is to take the precedence of all other things; and when the cry is "first" put into the heart, "What must I do to be saved?" "God be merciful to me a sinner," we are in such a distressed, anxious state, that the kingdom of God and His righteousness is "first" with us; we come into the meaning of the words, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." And it is a great blessing for those in whom God carries on the work with such power that their importunity will take no denial; they "ask," "seek," and "knock" continuously, until He arises for their help and grants them a hope in His mercy: thus proving that seeking the kingdom of God is "first" with them, by pressing forward and pursuing the narrow path with all diligence, until they are endued with power from on high to claim their sonship, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Redeemer.

The pathway of a child of God will ever be one of conflict and warfare; "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh;" and "when we would do good evil is present with us." We daily prove that of ourselves we can do nothing good; that all power must come from Him "in Whom we live, and move, and have our being." That it is He alone Who "worketh in us to do," and Who can enable us with earnestness and diligence to press forward.

But if the seeking the kingdom of God is "first" with us, there will be a lamenting all that is opposed to a growth in grace, and earnest prayer to God that we may be enabled to overcome all from within and without that will retard growth in the Divine life.

Deeply we have to mourn our iniquities, which so frequently grieve the Holy Spirit and cause Him to withdraw His gracious influences, and with weepings and supplications we return to Him, confessing our sin and begging Him to pardon us, to grant us a fresh application of the blood of sprinkling, and to speak peace to us, so that we may be enabled to rejoice *in Christ*, though so cast down, troubled, and distressed by the difficulties of the way, and groaning under the body of sin and death, which frequently causes God to hide His face from us.

"First." Sometimes it pleases the Lord, by deep affliction to cause us to seek His kingdom "first."

"He blasts our gourds  
And lays us low,"

and so embitters all in this life, that we feel there is none to whom we can go for help or comfort but Himself; all in this world fails.

And blessed be His name, when He is pleased so to sanctify whatever trial He sends that we are led to flee to Him "first" for all that we need, O how blessedly He appears for us, pouring "oil and wine" into our wounds, unfolding the riches of His love unto us, and granting us such sweet communion with Himself, that all in this world appears as nothing in comparison with these blessed revelations of His love, faithfulness, compassion, and power. O ye, who are troubled and tried, come "taste and see that the Lord is good." Ask of Him, and He will give to you liberally. He delights in our importunity, and will withhold no good thing from us. Be not satisfied with walking at a distance from Him. In Him there is healing balm for every wound, and none but they who have proved Him can imagine how blessedly He at times indulges His tried and tempted children with such rich out-pourings of His love, that they are constrained with the apostle Paul to glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon them.

Seek, then, "first" the kingdom of God, and beg of Him that you may not be drawn from Him by an over anxious care respecting the things of this life, nor by worldly conformity.

The blessing of God upon families, estates, business, and all necessary things of this life will avail us far more than all the thought or anxiety we can take. This blessing is frequently forfeited by an undue care, which takes the "first" place instead of the things of God; and then woe be to the liveliness of the soul, growth in grace, or fruitfulness in Divine things. Instead of this we sink into a lukewarm state, like the Laodicean church, and consider ourselves rich and increased in goods, and know not that we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. The gospel feasts, whether in public or private, are neglected. Like those bidden to the feast in the Word, some have "land," some "oxen," others relatives that claim their attention; and the diligently seeking "first" the kingdom of God and His righteousness is neglected. It is forgotten that the promise is, Do this, and "all these things shall be added unto you."

O that it may please God to put forth His power so abundantly in His children, that they may arise and shake themselves from the dust of sloth, worldly conformity, covetousness after this world's goods, over-anxious care, or whatever besetting sin comes between God and our souls, or the seeking His kingdom "first" and above all things.

May grace be given us daily to commit all that concerns us with regard to this life into the hands of Him Whose promise is, "All these things shall be added unto you."

Have we not abundant cause to testify of God's faithfulness to His word hitherto? Our path may not have been what we should have chosen; but God, Who is Love, has ordered every step of the way in tenderest love. All the discipline has been needed to wean us from ourselves, from all around us, and to lead us to set our hearts and affections on things above. And doubtless many of God's children can join with the writer in desiring to bless Him for His goodness in taking such pains with us, to keep us near unto Himself; and we can truly testify that even a little communion with Him far transcends the highest happiness this world can afford. And the afflictions and trials of this life are light indeed in comparison with what we enjoy in Him, and in walking with Him day by day in faith, hope and love, and the enjoyment of that peace which passeth all understanding.

The furnace is bitterly trying to poor nature, but it is frequently in those seasons that we are the most favoured with revelations of the true riches, happiness, and consolation we possess in Christ, and

at times He so reveals Himself unto us that we long to be with Him for ever, where sin will no longer mar all, but we shall be enabled to love, praise, and adore Him for evermore, as we vainly desire to do here.

May all His blood-bought family be enabled to cleave to Him more fully, and to shun all those things which will draw us from following Him "first." May we be very vigilant against our adversary the devil, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, and frequently assails us in very specious ways to draw us from God; also be very watchful against the deceitfulness of our hearts, seeking to God earnestly for daily—nay, hourly—grace and strength, to "war a good warfare," that we may be "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Truly may we exclaim, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of face." We loathe and abhor ourselves for our manifold iniquities when favoured with a view of the Lord's pacification towards us, and we go to Him in all our felt weakness, sinfulness, and helplessness, to beg Him to undertake for us, and to enable us to show forth His praise, and so to live to His honour and glory, that by our walk and conversation we may testify that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace."

"The very God of peace sanctify (us) wholly; and I pray God (our) whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

IOTA.

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### GENTLE DISCIPLINE.

*"Thy gentleness hath made me great."*—Psalm xviii. 35.

#### A REPRINT.

Gently the Summer dews descend  
O'er all the earth by night:  
Gently the sunbeams, in the Spring,  
Diffuse their radiant light:

Gently the Winter Snowflakes fall,  
Robing in white the ground:  
Gently the Autumn breezes blow,  
When all is calm around.

But not in Nature's realm alone,  
This influence we find;  
Our God by gentle discipline  
Oft educates the mind.

The rushing wind, the raging storm,  
The mighty hurricane,  
Exhibit His resistless power,  
And tell His wondrous Name.

But though we tremble as we hear  
Through these His awful voice;  
More oft His tender tones of love  
Bid every heart rejoice.

Gently He weans us from the world,  
And love of earthly things:  
Gently each treasure He withdraws,  
To which our fond heart clings.

Gently each idol He removes,  
From every cherished shrine :  
Gently each tendril He unclasps,  
Which we too closely twine.

Gently He checks our rising pride,  
And curbs our vain self-will ;  
Teaching us oft through faithful  
friends,  
Who thus His work fulfil.

Gently He leads each burdened soul,  
And gives the weary rest ;  
Gently the little ones He calls,  
And clasps them to his breast.

Gently He lays his hand on some  
Who fain would labour still ;  
And whispers, " I would teach thee  
now  
To bear, not do, My will.

His gentle dealings with His own,  
Soothe many an aching heart ;  
Which else would find it hard to bear  
In faith, its weary part.

FATHER ! we praise Thy Name for all  
Thy gentle discipline :  
Ne'er may we need a rougher call,  
Our grateful love to win !


ECCLA.

## LOVED, WASHED, AND DIGNIFIED.

A SERMON BY MR. GRACE,

PREACHED AT REGENT STREET CHAPEL, CITY ROAD, LONDON,  
ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCT. 12, 1848.

*" Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His Own blood : and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father ; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."*—Rev. i. 5, 6.

 HE words of my text form the song of the church militant here below, at times, and furnish the church triumphant above with that unceasing praise and adoration, not only to Christ, the second person in the Trinity, or the Eternal Son of God, but to each Person of the blessed Trinity—one God, Who is Father, Son and Holy Ghost—one God in essence.

Now, it appears from the scriptures of truth, from what is recorded here, that there was a needs-be that John the Divine,—who is so called, I suppose, to make a distinction between him and John the Baptist,—that this man should be banished to the Isle of Patmos to have a revelation of the things of God concerning the church of God to the end of the world ; and, if I recollect right, John was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil and came out unhurt. Now, dear friends, it is very evident to me that a man's life is preserved until God has accomplished all things that He has intended by him, and he is immortal till his day and generation work is done.

" Plagues and deaths around me fly,  
Till He bids I cannot die ;  
Not a single shaft can hit  
Till the God of love sees fit."

And not only was it true that John's spiritual life was preserved ; but his natural life was preserved also ; and therefore they thought

if they could not kill him they would banish him to Patmos; but that could not be done without the permissive will of God. No, no; in that Isle it was that John was to have the favoured revelation of the things of God. Now this should afford us some consolation. If John was preserved in the cauldron of boiling oil; if Daniel was preserved in the den of lions; if Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were preserved in the fiery furnace; "think it not strange," beloved, "concerning the fiery trial" of your faith, "as if some strange thing had happened unto you." You know the promise of God stands to you now, as much as ever it did to the patriarchs of old: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the floods, they shall not overflow thee," &c. And why is it that all the elect are sometimes put into the furnace? Sometimes we have a variety of things outwardly and inwardly; but when I am brought to this consideration,—that there is not an inward conflict or an outward trial I have but what is ordained of God, it has often afforded me consolation in these things. He sits as a refiner, and you know we are His property—His gold—and not one particle of it shall be destroyed, because the refiner knows the very time when the metal must come out of the crucible: and so does our blessed Master. He knows when He will bring out a vessel fit for the Master's use: and it is not to purge us from our sins, as dear Kent says; no, but to purge us from our dross,—

"They were numbered  
On the Scapegoat's head of old."

Now, some people make so much of their afflictions, as if they were meritorious. No, no; I have merited all the afflictions I have had by my sins; but the blessed Jesus is the only atonement and only satisfaction that has been made to law and justice for all the sins of the church of the living God.

Time would fail me, or any talented man, to preach to the full extent of the text I have got before me: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His Own blood," &c.

Why, look; there is a volume contained in every word. But the blessedness of it is this; when we are enabled to adopt the language and say, "Who loved me;" "Who loved us," as John includes himself in the "us."

I.—Now, first, it will be necessary to speak of character—the character of those who put in their claim to this "us." If I have strength to speak a little about character, it will be no new doctrine. No; I know, dear friends, you have not only Christ preached here in the fulness of His salvation, but also you know what it is to have the creature debased, and to be laid low in the dust; because

if we never know what it is to be laid low in the dust we shall never stand in need of washing. Now, if I have a people before me—and I dare say I have some—a people who have never had the carnal enmity slain; well, friends, if you have not, you cannot heartily assent to the doctrines of grace. You may say the doctrines of grace and election are very harsh doctrines. Why now say you, Is it to be credited that ever God should make creatures, and leave them to be damned? When things come to be put in such a way as this, there is that in the human mind that revolts at it. But, friends, let me put it in such a way as that it will be more palatable,—I mean, that it will not so much grate on your ears.

Now, when God put Adam in the garden of Eden, he told him the day he ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in that day he should die. Well, he did eat of the tree, and did die spiritually, and the image of God was lost in him, and the image of the devil stamped on him. Now God would have been just if He had damned all the world: but it was His sovereign pleasure to set His love on a certain portion and part of the human race before ever Adam fell; and, therefore, remember it is an act of sovereign grace that even any should escape the punishment due to us. Well, then, what becomes of the others? They were left in the ruins of the fall, and there they are now. Some people seem to think it not right to speak of the doctrine of reprobation, as well as of the doctrine of election. They are both set forth in the scriptures of truth. But if you were to take an hour to talk about it, if God chooses to take one and leave another, are we to arraign Him at our bar, and say, "What doest Thou?" In Romans ix. you read: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" What if God, willing to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." The one is fitted to destruction and the other is appointed to eternal glory. And shall we ask and say, "Why hast Thou done this?" My dear friends, when sovereign and electing love takes hold of poor sinners here, you see, we are all dead in trespasses and sins; but yet, according to the eternal purposes of Jehovah, predestinated to eternal life; and we find it runs in the glorious chain of salvation: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and

whom He justified, them He also glorified." So that our glorification is also connected with and arises from the foreknowledge of God, and His love that emanated from Himself from everlasting. "Having loved His Own that were in the world," blessed be God, "He loves them to the end." Thus, though it does not appear so at times, those that He predestinated to eternal life are also predestinated to eternal glorification.

Now, in their original condition there is no difference between the elect and the non-elect; and here it is where God first manifests that choice which, as one quaint author says, "He loved His people with a dateless love." There is no date to God's love; for "He appeared of old" to Jeremiah, "saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." While I was meditating last evening a little upon the word "everlasting," I felt we didn't take sufficient notice of such a word. We look at it; but we don't sufficiently consider it. It never can be lessened; never can be lost. When you and I have no sense of the love of God, yet remember, there is no alteration of His love to us—it beats the same for ever and ever. This love was manifest first in the eternal council of peace, that was settled in eternity. Now, when we come to go back to the ancient settlements of God,—that is, the covenant transactions between the Three Blessed Persons of the Holy Trinity, we see the manifestation of this love. God the Father gave His people to His Son. Equal love was manifested by God the Son; as it is set forth in Isaiah vi.: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And the prophet said, Here am I, send Me." He that redeems His bride, His church, which He had accepted at the hand of His Father, that in time the whole of our sins should be removed, and He would render perfect satisfaction, and justice should be satisfied for every sin that the church of God should ever commit as long as there is a church in the world.\*

These are some of the things that were done before there was time. God foreknew—foresaw—that Adam, as a free agent to stand before God, would fall, and therefore provision was made. These are some of the things that you often hear in this place, and not only here, but I daresay in other places; and blessed it is to hear them—but more so to receive them in the heart. You may have all the knowledge of this in your judgment and not a particle of it in your experience. Oh, are you an experimental man? I am. And if you have not an experimental knowledge of these in your conscience, they will never bring salvation to your soul. I first begin with that verse that Brewer has written in his "Hiding-

\* This may properly be termed an *adaptation* rather than an *interpretation* of the words in Isaiah vi.



place." You know, he speaks there of having no hiding-place at all:—

" But thus the eternal council ran,—  
Almighty love ! arrest that man ;  
I felt the arrows of distress,  
And found I had no hiding- place."

Oh, my dear friends, that the Lord might condescend of His goodness and mercy to grant that some poor sinner coming here this morning, knowing nothing of himself or of God, might know something of the goodness of God, by sending an arrow of conviction dipped in blood to arouse them. If you read Ephesians ii, there you will have it explained. In the first chapter the character is spoken of. The apostle says : " Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."

Well, now, take the second chapter, at the beginning, and the apostle says : " And you." Who ? Paul. You that were " chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." You that were " predestinated unto the adoption of children." " You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." " Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also," and so on. Again, " and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." But now comes such a sweet verse, that has sometimes so brought me to a stand, that I have wondered with holy admiration : " But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace ye are saved." Look, my dear friends, look ! Loved us before we had a being in the world ; when dead in trespasses and sins, loved us ; and in open manifestation of this love, " quickened us together with Christ. By grace ye are saved."


Now here begins the first evidence of that love. Well then, my dear friends, if your enquiry is : Am I really and truly one of those characters that are chosen to eternal life, and awakened, called, and quickened by God the Holy Ghost ; one that is coming and fleeing to Him by the love of God ? recollect you may want the internal evidence of it, and yet have it. Now I consider that the first awakening is neither more nor less than raising a poor sinner to newness of life in Christ Jesus. For if you go to the third

chapter of John you will see what our Lord says to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is an infusion of life to a soul dead in trespasses and sins. I do very much like to bring out some of these little ones, that have scarcely got their eyes open. You know in the church of God there are babes that cannot digest strong food. That I am a quickened soul, shall I ever know, sir? they ask. That has been the grand thing with me,—to know if I have even been a recipient or partaker of that life recorded in the word of God. Now, recollect, it is from the favour, grace and love of Him, that we have been convinced of sin; and this will be evidenced. For instance; there is no such thing as breathing in a dead body. Well, so a person that is dead in trespasses and sins never breathes after God; for their language is, "We desire not Thee, or the knowledge of Thy ways." And the evidence of life is the breathing and desire after God. Now you know as well as I do what is the evidence of life in a new-born child. "Is it alive?" we inquire. O yes, it is alive; it breathes. Furthermore, there is not only breathing, but something of the cry of the Spirit in the heart. Presently we have a full proof that the child lives, for it cries. And you find when the Lord sends an arrow of conviction into the heart of a poor sinner dead in trespasses and sins, there is a cry. What cry is it? A cry for mercy. Observe Saul of Tarsus. I have no hesitation in saying that man could make long prayers, in public and private too; and yet he never prayed with the understanding till quickened by God the Holy Ghost. Do you think, then, that the prayers of the unregenerate are not acceptable to God? We are told in scripture—and I take that as my guide—that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord."

*(To be continued.)*

### ENDURING GOODNESS.

*"The goodness of God endureth continually."* Psalm lii. 1.

 WEVER firm the belief in this truth on the part of the Lord's people may be, in a general way, it is only by the arising of special incidents that their faith in it is confirmed. That "goodness," which in grace quickens and convinces their souls, and leads them to the OPENED FOUNTAIN for purification, is also engaged in every movement of providence in sustaining and preserving. The bountiful care and never-sleeping eye of a covenant God ministers to every absolute need, and guards and fences from impending evil.

The recent serious accident (so-called) on the Great Eastern Railway

between Cambridge and Ely exhibits this, when the down express was thrown off the rails through a piece of iron which had been broken off and cast from a previous up-train. Many were seriously injured, and one has since died, yet in the midst of the calamity "the goodness of God" was most conspicuous towards some who "in the Lord," and by the ties of long friendship are very dear to us both at Littleport, in the Isle of Ely, and at Portsmouth. We take the liberty of inserting the following account as written by our esteemed friend Commander Key shortly after the accident occurred :

The first sign of the accident was the break being applied suddenly, that our carriage being so stopped as to throw us forward showed something was wrong. The carriage then jumped off the line and tilted partly on its side, when we heard a crashing and unusual noise, the carriage behind ours crushing into ours and pressing the back seat and partition upon us but not so as to jam us. The relief when all was at rest was great. Finding the door fixed I jumped out of the window, and with the help of a man lifted out my wife, nurse and children. Care was quickly taken to stop trains both ways. I then went to help the hurt ones, many of whom I could hear groaning. All were quickly got out and laid on the grass at the sides. The train was completely wrecked except a few near carriages. The engine and tender were on their side in a wet ditch, the carriages nearest to the engine were on their sides and across the line : our carriage seemed annihilated one side, the next one being *inside it*. When I returned to it for our small luggage I had to enter it from the back through the gap made. I was indeed aghast at the sight of it. A few feet more must have killed or seriously injured us all. I walked along the train raised my hands and praised and blessed the Lord for His goodness. I spent my time in repeating simple gospel truths to the wounded and giving stimulants and refreshments. General and Canon Brereton had their legs badly broken, a Mr. and Mrs. Cushing, who with two children were going to bury his mother in Norfolk, had their legs also badly broken, children not hurt. A dentist of Cambridge and a doctor of Lynn deserve much praise for unwearied exertions in binding up wounds and setting broken joints of fellow passengers. Shirts were torn up, cushions cut open and parts of carriages were used for splints and padding, &c., for joints. Several suffered great pain. The accident occurred about 6.45 p.m. and about four miles S.W. of Ely, and before dark trains came from both ways with workmen and a doctor, and by dusk the worst cases, that is, four men and one woman, were placed in a guard's van for Cambridge and the lesser hurts, such as broken arms, cuts, bruises, &c., were helped into the train for Ely. Our nurse, Mary Brown, and I went with the injured to Cambridge. When there two tram cars with the glass broken out one side and the woodwork of the windows cut away were used with a spring cart for carrying them to Addenbroke's Hospital, about one and a half miles. I was with them there till about twelve and saw the surgical treatment, when I left with our passenger

doctor and dentist (Dr. Rowell and Mr. Geo. Cunningham) for refreshment at an hotel and to sleep, our nurse also. Our feelings during this dreadful scene were varied. In the accident both Mrs. Key and I were supported by a sense of God's providential care, but spiritually I was much depressed from the sad scene of misery entailed by sin on sinful man. This was enhanced by the want of response to the gospel truths which I spoke to the sufferers. The power of Satan over both matter and spirit is evidently permitted by God, as in the case of Job, chap. i. 12; Christ Himself, Luke xxii. 53; and the poor woman in Luke xiii. 16. I found some relief on entering the hospital ward and reading "Christ our Peace" in large letters on the wall. After a short night's rest I rose early, and after some wrestling in prayer with the Lord, had a sweet experience of His peace in my soul, with a fresh dedication of all I am and have to His service. The line was cleared and repaired in the night—the rails had been torn up and bent—and by morning train I travelled to Ely and on to Littleport over the same spot. My wife suffered a sharp bruise in the back, but is again up and about. The children, though much frightened, are now perfectly happy and bright as usual. I would add, that my hat, which was on the seat at the time, was so jammed between the next carriage and the fore part of ours that I could not get it away. May the Lord teach us all the lessons necessary by this severe ordeal, and bless it to all

Yours, &c.,

July 31, 1882.

BEN. H. KEY.

To the above may be added that our beloved friend, Mr. Joseph Martin, who was in the same train, had an equally narrow escape of life and limb, being only a little bruised near the knee. Now as we contemplate the terrible scene which such an occurrence necessarily creates, how forcibly does it remind us of our constant dependence upon the Lord in all our goings out and comings in, while it demonstrates that His "goodness endureth continually." Never in this world will all the hair-breadth escapes of travellers by rail be known even by themselves. Overwearied signalmen and pointsmen, a flaw in the heavily-taxed machinery, and many other causes contribute to imperil life; and only the watchful eye, and omnipotent hand of Jehovah could amid all these "hold our soul in life, and suffer not our feet to be moved," even in a natural sense. To His ever-enduring "goodness" we owe all our mercies in this life: and if to them we can add the blessings of salvation and justification in Christ Jesus, a good hope through grace, and the sure prospect of life everlasting, it is our unspeakable privilege to belong to that elect number, of whom it is written: "Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord," Psalm cxliv. 15. The Lord richly sanctify all His dispensations to us.

THE EDITOR.

## THE LORD'S MANIFESTATIONS.

121, High Street, Gosport, April 9th, 1880.

My dear friends in the best of Friends,

I do not forget you, though you have not heard from me in answer to yours, which is always welcome to your junior in years and in grace.

I wrote to Mr. Ormiston for the book some time since, but have received no reply. And now I would humbly desire to write a few lines, hoping that He Whose words are words of life may be pleased to communicate a word in season to your souls. He knows just the spot we are in, and what is suitable to our present want. And we know that a word fitly spoken in the heart by His Spirit, is "like apples of gold in baskets of silver." As Jeremiah said: "Thy words were found and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." And the sweet psalmist knew the same blessed secret. He said, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth."

My dear friends and their unworthy brother are not ignorant of the sweetness of His word when it comes fresh from His lips; for His kisses are sweet kisses. I wish they would oftener come; "for His love is better than wine." Alas! He keeps distant, and stands afar off, so that I have to say, "How long, Lord? Why hidest Thou Thy face? Why art Thou so far from helping me? When wilt Thou come unto me." And if He gives a touch, or a knock, and I rise to open to Him He is gone, and I return to my own place again. Sometimes, while speaking I am favoured with life and feeling, and can speak with some authority, and do hope the Lord is pleased to bless His truth from my poor lips; but in private prayer I seldom find access; and this tries me, because this is one of the blessedest privileges of a christian; and having known through mercy the sweetness of finding liberty at a throne of grace, it pains the soul to get no audience. "Therefore, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell Him, that I am sick of love;" or, as we sometimes say, "Love-sick."

I have no doubt there is a cause for His absence; He has such an intimate knowledge of us, and of our sins of omission and commission, that He sees it needful and for our profit to stand behind our wall. Oh, that He would show Himself through the lattice and grant a glimpse now and then of His loveliness! so that we may know that He is only waiting His time to reveal Himself more conspicuously to our hearts.

It is our mercy to know that

"Whom once He loves He never leaves,  
But loves them to the end."

Accept Mrs. Hammond's love and best wishes to you both and Miss Colbrook, and from .

Yours in the faith of the Gospel of God,

Mr. G. Oakshott.

ALFRED HAMMOND.

### FRATERNAL GOOD-WILL.

July 19th, 1882.

Dear Sir,—We rejoice greatly that the friends have proved their high esteem which they have for your labours among them. You are certainly highly favoured of the Lord in putting you over a people whose hearts He has opened to receive the truth in the love of it,—fruit-bearing branches; quite an honour to your ministry, proving their faith by their work; gladdening your heart, causing you to rejoice that your labours have not been in vain in the Lord. The pastures which you have been privileged to lead them into prove to be good, and not mixed with poisonous errors;—not “another gospel, which is not another;” but the true, everlasting gospel of the grace of God—Christ crucified: “to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them who are saved Christ the power of God, and Christ the wisdom of God.” “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of joy; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.” How do the mountains flow down at His presence; the thunders of mount Sinai silence when He cometh forth, proclaiming liberty to the captives; the prison doors fly open when the great Law-fulfiller and Sin-atoner manifests Himself; the darkness disperses when the glorious Light of the World breaks in upon the poor benighted one. “Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains, for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy on His afflicted.” For the afflicted people He will save; but will bring down the high looks of the proud. “O give thanks unto the Lord, for His mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and gathereth them out of the land; from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses.” Sinai's thunders alarm them; Zion's arms embrace them.

We unite in sincere christian love to yourself, Mrs. Baxter, and family, and friends.

Yours in bonds never to be broken,

A VILLAGE PASTOR.

## FUTURE KNOWLEDGE.

*"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."* John.

Hereafter,—yes 'tis hidden now,  
Clouds rise, mists intervene,  
Hereafter we shall surely know  
What now cannot be seen.

These pensive sighs, these gloomy days,  
The aching of this heart  
Will one day end in loudest praise :  
"We know *now* but in part."

We see things in a riddle now,  
And judge from sense and sight :  
Hereafter we shall humbly bow  
And own God's way was right.

What Jesus does we often scan  
Through unbelieving tears :  
Hereafter when we see His plan,  
We'll wonder at our fears.

And though we worry and rebel,  
Hereafter, oft we prove  
Our Jesus doeth all things well ;  
His dealings are in love.

Those very clouds we fear to meet,  
That rise like swelling woes,  
Are but the dust beneath His feet  
He scatters as He goes.

Brighton.

He often on these clouds doth ride,  
Some blessing to convey,  
And while he doth some purpose hide,  
'Tis thus He takes His way.

Then walking in the dark, down here  
We grope our path along,  
And full of anxious care and fear  
Think all God's dealings wrong.

But He is working in the light,  
And we poor creatures try  
To judge with our short feeble sight  
The God that dwells on high.

Forgive our follies, God of love !  
And still each rising fear,  
Till we shall the "hereafter" prove  
In endless light up there.

And when our doubts and fears arise,  
And sighs heave from our breast,  
Oh come and bring before our eyes  
That land of endless rest.

And as by faith we get a view  
Of that "hereafter" bliss,  
'Twill cheer our hearts and help us  
through  
This thorny wilderness.

ANDYL.

## EGYPT AND THE WAR.



OW strange it seems that England should now be in collision with the ancient land of the pyramids and the sphynx! That the land which occupies so wide an extent in the pages of Holy Writ, and according to its predictions has become "the basest of kingdoms," so that it was not to "exalt itself any more," (Ezek. xxix. 15), should now be the centre of interest; and that the people who, for the space of about 2,400 years, according to prophecy, have been without a native princely ruler, and subject to the sceptre of a race of slaves, (Zech. x. 11), should be in conflict with one of the greatest of modern nations is something surely very extraordinary. It must be attributed by those who abide by the testimony of the Scriptures, and are not led away by the distraction of contentious politicians, to the hand of the Lord; of

Whom it is written : " He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay His hand, and say unto Him, What doest Thou ? " Dan. iv. 35.

To trace the details of the rise, course, and fall of this most wonderful of all historical countries, would require more space and time than we have to spare. Nebuchadnezzar crippled its acquired boundaries ; Persia under Cambyses conquered it. Alexander the Great ruled it with a rod of iron. Rome swayed the sceptre over it ; and after a series of humiliating changes it became subject to the power of Turkey and Mohammedan rule. And, if the declaration of those who appear capable of judging is received, it is the religion of the false prophet that has largely to do with the present important disturbance of order and serious hostilities.

By a singular coincidence the rise of Mohammedanism was nearly contemporaneous with that of the Papacy, and (as we showed some time ago in several articles) the latter in its image-idolatry became the chief sufferer from the precepts of the Koran being carried out with tribute, fire, and sword by the fierce followers of Mohammed. These two flagrant impostures have been the curse and scourge of so-called Christendom for over 1200 years, and it would seem that the *dominion* of either was not to last more than 1260. That the power to compel nations by war to submit to the pope's decrees was broken in 1866 by the great victory of Prussia over Austria, and confirmed by that of Germany over France in 1870, none can justly deny. And if A.D. 606 be reckoned as the time of the Papacy's definite arising with Universal pretensions the 260 years expired in 1866. And if Mohammedanism arose in definite form in A.D. 622, the 1260 years would bring us to the present year 1882. We merely offer this as a suggestion.

It would seem that at the present time there is a prevalent feeling among the Mohammedans that the waning power and influence of their religion is to be speedily restored by the appearance among them of one whom they call a Mudhi, or Right Director. And a certain Sheikh Ahmed, who resides at Mecca, and assumes to belong to the family of Mohammed, has issued a fiery address in which he assumes to have received a vision and revelation from the prophet imparting to him a mission of reform, and which has, it is asserted, been circulated largely in Asia Minor. Nor can any yet tell the course that Arabi (the great leader with whom our armies have to deal), or the Sultan of Turkey, whose sympathies are suspected to be with him, may yet take ; Moslem fanaticism has long looked with a jealous eye on the growing wealth and influence of England and nominally christian natives, in contrast with its own diminished authority ; for Egypt herself has shared in the benefits



arising from intercourse with Europe, notwithstanding the still degraded condition of her people; and were Arabi to prevail, it is believed that it would be the triumph of Mohammedanism, and that degradation would be tenfold increased among the lower orders of Egypt, with the ruin of all the prosperity that has resulted from Western enterprise.

It will therefore be remarkable if England is to be the chief means of this blow to Islamism. And the recent refusal of the Lascars to go in our ships to Egypt shows how they view Britain's position and conduct: though it may be justly doubted whether our Government have the slightest idea of the nature of their undertaking, or are in the slightest way concerned to bring about such a result, further than commercial interests are concerned. We know that the major part of Liberals and Conservatives would rather help than injure Popery, and that they would take one step willingly to work out Jehovah's purposes on Islamism is more than we credit them with: especially with the fact before our eyes that in India, the various Governments in office were long opposed to every effort to suppress the gross idolatry coupled with Hindooism. No: it is too much to expect carnal men—nominal professors of Christianity though they may be—to do anything that is for the glory of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus and the accomplishment of Jehovah's purposes. But believers should look above and beyond human agency. The present war (so far as the motives of those who have to carry it on are concerned) may be unjust or otherwise. This cannot invalidate the fact that "the Lord is a Man of War," and He is determined to "fulfil all His counsel." We may justly condemn or approve, as the circumstances require, the actions of our rulers, but let us at the same time watch what is wrought by the Lord through them as instruments.

It is an interesting truth that, while the most ancient of all the nations of the earth has, according to prophecy, been shorn of all its ancient splendour and power, there is not a line in the Bible that predicts its utter extermination, like that of Babel. While infidelity grows proud in its assumed triumphs over Revelation, Egypt and the Jews confront it with an invulnerable phalanx of evidence. All that was written of the abasement yet miraculous preservation of them has thus far come to pass. And what of their future? What mean the words of the prophet: "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction. In that day shall there be an altar unto the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the

Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and He shall send them a Saviour, and a great one, and He shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it. And the Lord shall smite Egypt; He shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and He shall be intreated of them and shall heal them. In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian in Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, "Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance," Isa. xix. 18-25.

Two stages in the history of the past have been regarded as fulfilling all the above. 1st: the three centuries before Christ when numbers of Egyptians became proselytes to the Jewish religion and the Old Testament Scriptures were translated into Greek by Egyptian Jews, and an altar to the Lord erected in the land. 2nd: the Pentecostal era, after the death and glorification of the Saviour, when Egypt and the region of Assyria largely shared in the blessings of the Gospel together with the Jews. But there may be reserved a third era, now not far off, when the glorious Gospel of Christ shall pervade Egypt and the vast district in Asia where imperious Assyria once dictated to all the nations and peoples known to her. We dare not assume to prophesy: our aim will be attained if this brief article leads the Lord's people to look for the further development of that approaching Kingdom of their Redeemer, which they pray to come, and that with speed.

THE EDITOR.

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## THEOLOGY IN AMERICA.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JONATHAN AND JOSEPH.



**JONATHAN**, the American schoolman, being very desirous that Joseph should be taught theology, sends him a periodical entitled the "Pittsburg Christian Advocate," containing the rules and doctrines of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, the reading of which gave rise to the following dialogue between Jonathan and Joseph.

*Jonathan (to Joseph)*—How happy I am to be privileged with an opportunity of communicating my thoughts to you, feeling truly interested in your spiritual welfare. I shall now avail myself of that

I have long wished for, namely,—to discuss a few topics with you relative to the doctrines of Methodism. I guess you won't be offended, will you, Joseph? Now, Joseph, there is one thing I wish to impress upon your mind. One branch of our theology is "Human Accountableness;" which you will do well in examining. I guess you know that we are all free agents, and endowed with ability to discern between virtue and vice. That it is for man himself to decide whether, in the use of his reason and conscience and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, he shall build up for himself a destiny of blessedness, or whether, perverting those attributes, he shall go forth to a destiny of ruin.

*Joseph*—Well, Jonathan, in plain terms, I envy not your position. You talk of "reason and conscience," and before that you set up a poor fallen dead sinner (Ephes. ii. 1) as a god, to decide his own destiny. Human reason is as blind as a bat (Deut. xxviii. 29), and you trust it with the important helm to watch your eternal interests; having consigned your ship and cargo into the hands of blind "reason" and a natural "conscience." The latter is only a natural monitor, which can be bribed (1 Sam. viii. 3; Amos v. 12), and you left as a wreck drifted on the sands of delusions (Isaiah lxvi. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 11). Besides, are you aware, Jonathan, that a "natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God?" (1 Cor. ii. 14). And here you set him forth as a man endowed with ability and discernment in all spiritual things, although the scriptures tell you positively that "the dead know not anything" (Eccles. ix. 5). And then, to make the case look a little better, you 'tack' upon blind "reason" and natural "conscience," "and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." This reminds me of an old ship, wrecked within the precincts of a place called Eden, the firm of which, I believe, is as old as Adam that lay claim to her. However, they were determined to make her sea-worthy once more, and from that day to this have never ceased painting her and caulking her (2 Kings ix. 30; Jer. iv. 30). The paint blisters and spoils, and the caulking material used to stop up the leakage is called filthy rags (Is. lxiv. 6); but of course you would not like that any party should directly charge you with this, and therefore beg a favour (making your own propositions, which is very natural to natural men), namely, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by Thy name to take away our reproach" (Is. iv. 1). "Virtue" is said to be a moral goodness which a natural person (so inclined) may acquire, by dint of perseverance. And in this wonderful progression, he shall build up for himself "a destiny of blessedness" upon his own sandy foundation, a description of which is given in the following words: such people "shall be likened unto a foolish man, which

built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it" (Matt. vii. 26, 27).

*Jonathan*—My dear friend, when I commenced this topic, it was not my intention to enter into an analysis of the doctrines (not in detail), but to give you some of the leading features. I think you omitted to cut me a slice out of the last few words in my paragraph in your running comment. But listen to me, Joseph, And who would not rather assume the risks of such a constitution than be without its possibility? Who would not rather pass onward to the skies by his own preference, and in the expenditure of all practical personal diligence, than to be arbitrarily lifted into the enjoyment of the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? Is it well and essential that Divine grace dispose and assist us in the way of righteousness? but for even Divine grace to compel us along the path to immortality would be to do violence to our nature; to divest our course of all virtue, and to preclude all high reward. Verily, it is sweet to be free. There is genuine luxury in the assurance that we own ourselves—that only God is greater than we; and that He respects the manhood He has conferred upon us. The power of determining our own ways, and constructing our own characters, and mapping out our own future, is not to be lightly esteemed, or lightly surrendered.

*Joseph*—I have a few words to offer you in return, my friend, which I hope will have their effect. I always avoid, if I can, an argument for mere argument's sake. Why, Jonathan, where have you been to learn these erroneous doctrines. Not in the Bible; nor at a throne of grace. Where, then? In your colleges, where you make bishops by scores, and parsons by hundreds. Where men learn to preach as parrots learn to talk, and give lectures upon 'Telegraphs,' 'Railways,' 'Art and Science,' 'Botany,' 'Anatomy,' 'Astronomy,' 'Physiology,' 'Phrenology,' 'Geology,' 'Philosophy,' &c. And when you profess to be master of all these arts, you fail then, if you cannot clothe your sermon in the gorgeous robes of eloquent politics,—and you know 'tis impossible to climb up into your "holy orders" in any other way. And I may truly add that, should you fail to attain to this state of "American Methodist perfection," as sure as you live, Jonathan, your "piece of bread" may lie on the shelf until it is mouldy ere you get put into a "priest's office." Well, my friend, if I omitted something in my last reply, I will try to remember you in this. You say. "And who would not rather assume the risk of such a constitution, than be without its possibilities." It appears from these words, your salvation is a matter of speculation; an assumption of risks—a trade

of uncertainties—a foolish virgin lamp—profession—no oil in the vessel (Matt. xxv. 3.) Aye, to be sure; but you can soon rectify that by saying, “I go sir,” as you abound with oil wells. And besides, what an honour it must be to you to go “a warfare at your own charge,” and “pass onwards to the skies by his own preference.” And what an advantage you have on your side. “Who would not rather pass onward” in their own strength, and especially being their own choice, towards—if not “to the skies”—if to only have it said, after his decease, “He worked hard;” “he strove well;” “wonderful in the means;” “see what an amount of good he did;” “how strict he was in keeping our rules;” “what a pattern of moral virtue;” “he must have eaten the ten commandments;” “but somehow he grew dark in these things at the last.” And no wonder, for even unto this day, when Moses is read the veil is upon their heart (2 Cor. iii. 15).

But while you glory in having made your choice, Jonathan, God’s people glory in Him Who made choice of them (Ephes. i. 4). And with all your boast “in the expenditure of all practical personal diligence” to obtain—not a prize, because you strive unlawfully, but—a blank! Which is not the case with those whom Jesus “loved with an everlasting love,” called by the Holy Ghost, saved by His grace, “raised them up from a death of sin to a life of righteousness:” “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to His Own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Tim. i. 9). We can glory in nothing save in “eternal redemption.” *There* lies a colossal and an immortal expenditure of blood, one drop of which would quench hell out were it to drop in. And this blood-shedding was for the remission of all the sins—both past, present and to come—of all the election of grace (Rom. xi. 5). And it would be as well, while you are reading the reference, to read the two following verses, which will explain it more fully. Sovereign grace to a poor, blind, ruined, wretched, helpless, hell-deserving sinner, would be esteemed as a glorious lift into the spiritual enjoyment of the children of God; and afterwards, and all the way, kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, and taken to “the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” But you disdain the help that God’s children are compelled to receive ere they are “lifted into the enjoyment” you speak of. Here it appears is no small difficulty,—to confess what you don’t believe; but being thoroughly shamed out of it, you whisper faintly, “It is well and essential that Divine grace dispose and assist us in the way of righteousness: but for even Divine grace to compel us along the path to immortality, would be to do violence to our nature.”

Well, Jonathan, and may I be allowed to ask you what that **is** in your nature that prompts you to utter such unheard-of **arrogance** (except within the pale of your own dear Methodistical Episcopal Church)? Ah, it is well—and only just, well and essential—that Divine grace dispose and assist, though we could of **our** own free-will and natural strength accomplish the task alone, **as** we abhor that word “imputed” righteousness. As you have **called** for an explanation of that which exists in your nature, and **prompts** you to these utterances, now, Jonathan, I hope the truth will give you no offence, but it is pride of heart; and that first **made** its appearance in “Lucifer, the son of the morning,” for which he was cast out of heaven. For to be compelled to worship Jesus, when God gave the command, “Let all the angels of God **worship** Him,” Satan, like you, refused; feeling that very act would **and** did “do violence to his nature.” And to give all the honour **and** praise, and power and glory to Jesus, was just what Satan **declined** to do, seeing it would divest him of all meritorious **rewards** due to pious, pompous “virtues” like his; and then his proud, independent spirit echoed, “Verily it is sweet to be free.” “There is genuine luxury in the assurance that we own ourselves—that only God is greater than we, and that He respects the manhood he has conferred upon us.” What “luxury” to stand upon **the** hill-top of your own conceit! and see ourselves “in the **assurance**” of that which nobody else sees besides you! What a **size** you must be on your side of the Atlantic! How do you feel, Jonathan, when an ox comes down to your water to drink? Why, of course, you treat him with contempt, and say “that only **God** is greater than we.” Well, it is an act of great condescension on your part to admit as much as this. And, pray, what has that **dignified** piece of “manhood” you boast of to do with the **salvation** of the soul? This question might have been saved, had **I** recollected that yours from first to last is a system of fleshly **worship**, and that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,” and “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Neither can you, while you claim “the power of determining your own ways, and **constructing** your own character, and mapping out your own future.” These mighty wonders are among the first-born of your strength, as **their** size is so prodigious. O the wonderful power of freewill! Who can conceive a millionth part of “the power of determining **thy** own way?” We believe “there is a way which seemeth right **unto** a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov. xiv. 12); and that “the ways of a fool are right in his own eyes” (Prov. xii. 15). However wrong it may be in the eyes of others, who take **the** views of the Bible, and not of a mortal, upon such important

things as these ; constructing railways, tunnelling through rocky mountains, constructing Great Easterns, conducting Abyssinian expeditions, and constructing plans of campaigns, for thoroughly effecting and giving one of the most disastrous and crushing blows to one of the most powerful nations in the world, together with building pyramids, are all in the shade, far behind, compared with the "determining," "constructing," and "mapping out" our future. The Bible says, God leadeth His people "in paths they have not known." And also, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not ;" and that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Jeremiah prays, "That the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk" (Jer. xlii. 2). Which is a proof clear enough that God's children can neither "determine," "construct," nor "map out" their future or destiny ; and those who can will be "lightly esteemed" in their own estimation. And the idea of surrender would be a thousand times more galling than the surrender of Paris was to the French.

J. F.

*(To be continued.)*


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## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

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**BUT FOR A SEASON.**—There is a "needs be" for these trials and temptations, or God would not have appointed you to walk in such a path. If there were nothing before your eyes but the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and you were looking forward to be put into the peaceable possession of it at death, without any intermediate trouble or sorrow, you would not be walking in the path of tribulation through which, and through which alone, it is declared that we must enter the kingdom of heaven. You would not be a partaker of the sufferings of Christ, which you must be, if you are to be a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. You would have, therefore, no "fellowship of His sufferings," no being "made conformable unto His death," no "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," nor being "delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Beside which, you would be no companion for the poor afflicted family of God; you would have few errands to the throne of grace ; few openings up of the Scripture to your mind ; few discoveries of the pity and compassion of Him Who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and little sympathy with the Man of sorrows. Your smooth, easy, even path, would set you far away from the choicest saints of God, and from the best part of living experience.


*J. C. Philpot.*

## THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

## No. X.

## THE WITHERED HAND RESTORED.

Matt. xii. 9-14, Mark iii. 1-6, Luke vi. 6-11.

OMPLAINTS and diseases, in all their strange and distressing variety, appear before us in the Gospels to bear witness to the eternal power and Godhead of Him "Who is our Hope." Neither does anything more display the innate depravity of the unregenerate heart and the enmity of the carnal mind against God, than the hostility of the leading professors in the Saviour's day at His merciful kindness to the miserable sufferers. Nothing He did pleased them. His preaching exposed the hollowness of their religious pretensions, and His miracles confounded their adverse and blasphemous assertions respecting Him. Sabbatarians of the strictest sort, the Pharisees and their followers assumed to abstain on the seventh day from everything that savoured of secular occupation; though, like the modern Jews, they did not object to the employment of Gentiles in what they deemed unlawful for themselves. But the *spirit* of the sabbath, as GOD'S REST, they never understood. And when He Who alone honoured it in accordance with the scope of Jehovah's institution stood before them, their hate knew no bounds: and could they have hindered the performance of His benevolent work, they would, whatever the loss sustained by the Lord's glory and the creature's comfort. But, "I will work, and who shall let it?" applies to all those decrees of mercy which in His mediatorial character He is pledged to carry out as the Executor of the Father's goodwill and pleasure. How consoling this truth to the Lord's afflicted and timorous when the Spirit shines upon it and reflects it in their hearts. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure," is the answer to all insinuated impossibilities, and, "If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in Mine eyes, saith the Lord of Hosts," is a rebuke to all questioning as to ways and means. •

Our present subject takes us to Capernaum. The site is now disputed, only a mass of ruins being left. There our blessed Lord fixed His abode, as a prophet without honour in His own country—a place exalted to heaven by His presence, and debased to hell by



its antagonism to Him. It was the sabbath following that on which He and His disciples had walked through the corn fields, and He entered what appears to have been the chief synagogue in the place, or the one to which He usually resorted; and as Luke informs us (chap. vi. 6.) "He taught the people," although Matthew and Mark are silent on that point. What gracious results were produced by His teaching, the Holy Spirit does not inform us. On the contrary, we are shown how, in the face of the preaching by God Incarnate, the human heart, instigated by the powers of darkness, could develop its worst propensities. And if so, why should the Saviour's heralds wonder when their testimony meets with contempt, and their persons with hatred? "It is enough that the disciple be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord." But most self-evident is the fact that, the greatest enmity towards Christ and His messengers has been exhibited by men "having the form of godliness." Human nature unstripped of its filthy rags, and wrapped up in an assumed righteousness, can never feel other than bitter enmity towards those who expose it. It was quite enough for the confusion of the Pharisees to be brought into close contact with that Holy One, Whose Divine simplicity in goodness formed so striking a contrast to their own guile and thinly-veiled hypocrisy; and an incident was ready, like a spark, to kindle the flame of malice within them.

Matthew says, "And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered," chap. xii. 10; and Luke (with whom Mark agrees) adds: "And the Scribes and Pharisees watched Him whether He would heal on the sabbath day," chap. vi. 7.

The "*hand*" throughout Scripture is the emblem of operative power. The hand "*withered*" therefore becomes the symbol of impotence. It cannot lay hold or make use of anything. And, *spiritually*—we say not, *morally*—this is true of all men. *Spiritually*—towards God, all is weakness and inability with fallen man, however *morally*—towards man, there may exist power to do many things—a power, nevertheless, for which man is indebted to the qualifying gifts (physical and mental) and providence of God. The vitalizing and invigorating sap has been dried up by original sin. The hand that once was free to do whatever man listed has lost its pristine vigour. It laid hold on the tree of knowledge of good and evil in Eden, but was not permitted while there, under the covenant

of works, to lay hold on the tree of life, Gen. iii. 22-24. And Adam has transmitted his withered hand to each of his posterity. But who knows? who feels this? Only they whom the Spirit has quickened to spiritual life. Only they who, under fear of wrath, have striven to lay hold on Jehovah's mercy and promises in their own strength. Only they who have put forth every effort to believe and take the Lord at His word, and have utterly failed. No Arminianism can survive this ordeal. No duty faith can glory, when thus weighed in the balances and found wanting. The grand truth has to be submitted to that, not only the *merits*, but the *grace-strength* of Christ must be put forth on behalf of the utterly helpless one. And when will the dear Saviour afford His needed succour? Will it be really on His holy day? Shall His resurrection power be glorified on the day that commemorates the auspicious event? No matter: it is always sabbath when Jesus works and blesses. It is the soul's peaceful resting time.

But there are watchers. There are those on the look-out who hate the Healer and have no compassion for the diseased. These are the false shepherds, the self-seeking pastors, who, from the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel until now, have the woe denounced against them for not strengthening the weak, nor binding up that which was broken. Heads of the people they may be, of those who are described as "the fat and the strong;" but they have no sympathy with him that has the withered arm. Their preaching proclaims that "God helps those that helps themselves." Vain is the hope of "him that is without power." Job xxvi. 2. Their exhortation bids the sinner take hold of Jesus and rejoice; they can only reprove those who assert their inability to do so.

Many are the allusions in the Psalms to watchful observers of the good man; and most of them point to the treatment of the gracious Messiah. And as the Scribes and Pharisees with eager eyes beheld the man with the withered hand, they instantly revert to Him Whose fame as the compassionate and infallible Healer was known throughout all that region. And assuming a pious zeal, which served as a temporary mask for their deceit, they ventured to approach the Lord Jesus, and to ask Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse Him," Matt. xii. 10. "But," says Luke, "He knew their thoughts and"—instead of directly answering them—He "said to the man which had the

withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst," Chap. vi. 8.

Up to this time there does not appear to have been any expectation on the part of the afflicted one that he would be thus singled out for healing mercy. He was sitting with many others, listening to the life-eternal truths dropping from the lips of Him into Whom the Father had poured all His grace, and perhaps he was hoping he might yet share in the Saviour's beneficence. But suddenly he was aroused, and called to occupy a prominent position in the midst of friends and foes to illustrate the power and authority of the Lord Jesus. And well does this exemplify the way of the Lord still. Long afflicted, weary and spent, little imagining deliverance is so near, the Lord's people, bowed down with guilt and incapable of any spiritual work, are often thus suddenly brought into all the prominence of a gracious manifestation of sovereign mercy and healing power. From sitting in the dust of despondency they are aroused to stand forth as the witnesses of the Lord's "strength of salvation." The voice of the Beloved bids them "Rise up, and come away" from all that bound them in sorrow and silence before, and "or ever they are aware their souls are made as the chariots of Ammi-nadib." O wondrous voice! O irresistible call! "And he arose and stood forth." Obedient to Him who commanded him thus to act, the man serves well to exhibit the willingness of all the Saviour's redeemed in the day of His power. It is now His turn to question.

"Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" Luke vi. 9. Let it be remembered that it was stated just before that our Lord "knew their thoughts"—and those thoughts towards Himself were in the fullest intent those of *murder*. Could they have *destroyed* his life on the sabbath, "the end," as with our modern Jesuits, would have "sanctified the means," however evil in their nature. But, "Is it lawful," asks the Son of God, "to do good," in healing, or "to do evil," in seeking to accuse Him, without just cause, unto death by stoning? Were they resting from malice, and consequently from *evil* on the sabbath, while they condemned His activity in deeds of mercy on that day? But the Saviour presses them still closer. "And He said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and

lift it out?" Dared they deny this? No, rigid Sabbatarians as they professed to be, they would serve their own interests by preserving a beast from destruction or injury, as an act of scripturally-approved humanity, while they loaded with obloquy the disinterested kindness of God Incarnate. But, added the Lord Jesus, "How much then is a man better than a sheep?"—one who has a soul, and especially one that is dear to the heart of everlasting love, and is waiting for the health-restoring grace of His salvation? Shall man be careful over the beasts that perish when they are his property, and shall not Jehovah care for His flock, yea, of each sheep and lamb pertaining to it, when it is not His will that one of the little ones should perish? "Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days," Matt. xii. 11, 12.

How cogent yet gentle was this remonstrating argument; but they who heard it "held their peace," Mark iii. 4, for their hearts were encased in steel, and their minds blinded with proud rage. The gracious Healer perceived this, for we are told He "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts," ver. 5. Nor is this difficult to understand, or to reconcile with the Lord's fixed purposes concerning them. Whatever display of Nature's depravity appeared before the eyes of Christ, it could only affect His unspotted soul with anger and grief. As the sin-bearer of His people, He had to endure for them the penalty of all transgressions, and sin in every form was hateful and grievous to His immaculate purity.

Having surveyed the silent foes whose countenances proclaimed their pent-up malignity, the Lord Jesus addressed the afflicted man, saying, "Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other," Mark iii. 5. The deed was done—and on the Sabbath. The God-man had wrought a work in the fullest confidence of His Father's approbation; even as He said, "I do always those things that please Him." A needy recipient of merciful kindness had his heart gladdened by the healing bestowed, while the Pharisees "filled with madness," Luke vi. 11, "went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him," Mark iii. 6.

It is thus Satan and his emissaries ever display their enmity against the work of God. Need the believer then wonder at the opposition he encounters from "the fiery darts of the devil," or men

robed in their own vain righteousness? Proving, like the man with the withered hand, that their own weakness and inability to do anything cannot prevent the Saviour working and reaching their case, their deliverance is beheld with mortified rage, and desperate hatred. Rather would carnal professors hear of no salvation, than that which is accomplished sovereignly, and in the Lord's time and way. But, eternal praise to the riches of grace! "surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land," *Psa. lxxxv. 9.* The withered hand that fain would lay hold on the Hope set before it in the Gospel, and touch the hem of that sacred garment of salvation and robe of righteousness, which send forth the infallible healing virtue, and provide a covering for the naked, that hand shall receive the desired power: for "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them," *Psa. cxlv. 19.* And all is accomplished when the Saviour speaks. The Holy Spirit echoes His words with power in the hearts of His people, and


*"Gives them firmly to believe,  
And to enter into rest."*

No longer do they hesitate to accept the consolation of the Gospel; no longer are they staggered at the promises through unbelief. With delivered Hezekiah they can exclaim: "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and Himself hath done it." The voice of authority and empowering mercy has bid them "stretch forth the hand," and they with ease have been enabled to do so, and can now lay claim to all that God has laid up for them in Christ, and ratified as theirs experimentally by the witness of His spirit. "Lord increase our faith."

THE EDITOR.

### THE POWER OF GRACE.\*

Nov., 1840.

My dear Sister Jane,  
 **KNOW** of no enjoyment comparable to that of solitary communion with our God; to converse with Him in the desert —this is enjoyment indeed, to freely seek from my Father and my Saviour all that I need. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out his roots by the river; and shall not see when heat cometh; but his leaf shall be

\* See page 183.

green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from bearing fruit." O that I and you, dear sister, may resemble such a tree. O give me to drink of the loving waters of heaven—that water which flows from the everlasting rock, even from the riven side of our precious Saviour. Under these reflections of the mercies of a covenant God towards me, a poor sinful worm, did the loving waters flow, and filled my soul with joy unspeakable. Great is the goodness of the Lord; His mercies endure for ever. Yes; "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." On Sunday morning we had such a sermon! Of a truth it may be said that Jesus was in our midst. "In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance." In Christ we have obtained this inheritance. Yes, there is an inheritance, a rest that remains for the people of God. Bless the Lord, O my soul; for my God doeth wonders, and His mercy endureth for ever. How do we obtain this inheritance? By being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His Own will. Bless His precious name; because we are filled with the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. I sometimes think that I could go and live with Christ. But, oh, how could I appear with all these mountains of sin and uncleanness! Could I take them with me? O, no! I could not do such a thing; though my master\* vainly supposes he could. Dear Lord, bow Thy heavens, and make these mountains flow down and melt like wax, and be lost in Calvary, at Thy presence. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The right hand of the Lord doeth wondrous things. The right hand of the Lord is exalted. The Lord is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation.

My dear Sister, when I look back at years that are past, I behold how I grieved you; and many times how I grieved the hearts of the excellent of the earth, my parents, by hardened unbelief and proud disdain of that precious book of life, which now is my blest portion and my meat and drink. Bless that precious Name, Whom to know is life eternal, that God, Who is rich in mercy, with the great love wherewith He loved us, hath quickened us who were dead in trespasses and sins; and broken down the middle wall of partition between us, so making peace, by abolishing the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in Himself of twain one new man. By grace we are saved. So surrounded am I with infidels and profane and abandoned persons; and I have always noticed that in our profession (surgical) five out of ten are

\* Alluding to the gentleman he was then an assistant to.

infidels. Is it not an almost incredible inconsistency of the human mind, that those who by their profession are called upon to attend the children of men from the cradle to the grave; who are surrounded with disease, sufferings, and death; who each day behold the vanity and wretched misery of our earthly existence;—is it not surprising that they should think the least of that God Who has declared, “I kill and I make alive: I wound and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand?” Alas! how often amidst afflictions and anguish, when surrounded with all the solemn anticipations and painful circumstances of death, they treat with scorn Him Who bore our sorrows, Who is the Friend of sinners, and the Giver of life everlasting; at Whose command the dead arise from the silence of the tomb! Surely, then, it is not by the contemplation of earthly objects that the sinner is turned from the error of his ways. Even if the day of judgment and the horrors of the bottomless pit were made manifest to the eyes of the unbeliever, still his heart would indulge in mocking and derision.

Dear Sister, once we were such, we were partakers with them; we were sometimes darkness, though now we are light in the Lord. I will make you willing in the day of My power. Such were we. But we are washed, we are sanctified, we are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. And deeply do I feel this unspeakable mercy during the discourses. I am not in that darkness, blessed be God. There is a heaven: those that are there enjoy the presence of their God and their Saviour. “When I consider the heavens, the moon, and the stars, which Thou hast ordained, Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and the Son of man that Thou regardeth him?” Every eye of the children of God, and every heart shall be fixed eternally upon that Saviour; and the sentiment of every soul through vast eternity will be, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee?” And the choir of God’s people on the earth, their voices will vibrate and redound with glory to Thee, saying, “Whom on the earth do we desire beside Thee?” “It is in Thee we live, move, and have our being.” “I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Oh, what tongue could express that precious love of God? the mercies of Emmanuel—God with us. His name is Jah: he rideth between the cherubims. Let glory be given to God—to that precious Son of God, Who bore the chastisement of our peace, and was crucified for us. Oh, what an insight of the sufferings of Jehovah the prophet Isaiah had, when he writes: “He shall come up as a root out of a dry ground; in Whom there was no form nor comeliness, nor any beauty that we should desire Him.” Yet, Thou blessed Lord, Thou art the “fairest of ten thousand, the altogether lovely.” The smell of His garments

are like myrrh, aloes, and frankincense, and all the chief spices. "If ye see my Beloved, tell Him," saith the Church, "I am sick of love." "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" The prophet saw Him several hundred years before His birth, and rejoiced to see His day. "He saw it and was glad." When he saw the bright, the Morning Star, he rejoiced with exceeding great joy; unspeakable and full of glory. He saw Him "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" and he beheld Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. Zechariah also, with the eye of faith, beheld the sword of the Lord awake to strike the Shepherd, and the Man which was the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts. O my Jesus, Thy sufferings must have sunk Thee, when Thou was made a curse for us. On the anguish of those moments, when the Son of God, clothed in our flesh, was sorrowful even unto death, and cried out in the bitterness of His soul: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Deliver my soul from the sword: save me from the mouth of the lion! View Him also in the garden: His soul sorrowful, being in an agony: His sweat pouring out like great drops of blood on the ground. Remember that when He had "offered up prayers and supplications, with crying unto Him that was able to save Him from death;" and we read "He was heard in that He feared"; yet He gave His life willingly for sinners such as we! Blessed Lord, what manner of love is this, that we should be called the sons of God!

Dear Sister, to the Lord our God belongeth mercy. Yes, abundant mercy, loving kindness and redemption. Blessed be the Lord our God. Well, dear Sister, let us go unto the Lord! and ask that we may receive with meekness this good and perfect gift which is from above; and come to Him Whom the Father has given. Come to Christ our Saviour. For our Lord has declared, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out;" and has promised also that He will at the last day raise up every one that believeth on Him. Dear Sister, the christian does not lose that which he returns into the hands of his Heavenly Father: he gladly resigns his earthly nature. It is not forced from him; he willingly resigns it. David laid aside his shepherd's garb, when anointed King of Israel. The redeemed of Christ wished to depart hence, when it is no longer needful for them to remain upon earth. The aspiration of their souls is: "When shall I come and appear before God?" Let us walk in wisdom—toward them that are without; redeeming the time: "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man: unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."



“Jesus can make a dying bed  
 Feel soft as downy pillows are ;  
 While on His breast I lean my head,  
 And sweetly breathe my life out there.”

Your loving Brother,

JOSEPH PORTER.

## WARM ZEAL FOR HEAVEN.

LETTER BY S. RUTHERFORD.

S. Rutherford to Carsluth (Letter 119. p. 386. vol 1.)

*(Communicated).*

Much Honoured Sir,



LONG to hear how your soul prospereth. I earnestly desire you to try how matters stand between your soul and the Lord. Think it no easy matter to take heaven by violence. Salvation cometh now to the most part of men in a night-dream. There is no scarcity of faith now, such as it is ; for ye shall not now light upon the man who will not say he hath faith in Christ ;—but, alas ! dreams are no man's rights.

Worthy Sir, I beseech you in the Lord, to give your soul no rest till ye have real assurance, and Christ's rights confirmed and sealed to your soul. . The common faith and country-holiness, and week-day zeal, that is among people, will never bring men to heaven. Take pains for your salvation ; for in that day, when ye shall see many men's labours and conquests (a) and idol-riches lying in ashes, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burnt with fire, Oh, how dear a price would your soul give for God's favour in Christ ! It is a blessed thing to see Christ with up-sun, and to read over your papers and soul accounts with fair day-light. It will not be time to cry for a lamp, when the Bridegroom has entered into His chamber, and the door is shut. Fy, fy, upon blinded and debased souls, who are committing whoredom with this idol clay, and hunting a poor wretched, hungry heaven, a hungry breakfast, a day's meat from this hungry world, with the forfeiting of God's favour, and the drinking over of their heaven over the board (b) (as men used to speak) for the laughter and sports of this short forenoon ! All that is under the vault of heaven, and betwixt us and death, and on this side of sun and moon, are but toys, night-visions, head-fancies, poor shadows, watery froth, godless vanities, at their best, and black hearts, and salt and sour miseries, sugared over, and confected with an hour's laughter or two, and the conceit of riches, honour, vain court and lawless pleasures.

Sir, if ye look both to the laughing side, and to the weeping side of this world, and if ye look not only upon the skin and colour of things, but into their inwards, and the heart of their excellency, ye shall see that one look of Christ's sweet and lovely eye, one kiss of His fairest face, is worth ten thousand worlds of such rotten stuff, as the foolish sons of men set their hearts upon. Oh, sir, turn, turn your heart to the other side of things, and get it once free of these entanglements, to consider eternity, death, the clay-bed, the grave, (c) awesome judgment, everlasting burning quick in hell, where death would give as great a price, (if there was a market, wherein death might be bought and sold,) as all the world. Consider heaven and glory. But alas! why speak I of considering these things which have not entered into the heart of man to consider? Look into those depths (without a bottom) of loveliness, sweetness, beauty, excellency, glory, goodness, grace and mercy that are in Christ: and ye shall then cry down the whole world, and all the glory of it, even when it is come to the summer bloom; and ye shall cry, "Up with Christ! Up with Christ's Father! Up with Eternal Glory!" Sir, there is a great deal less sand in your glass than when I saw you, and your afternoon is nearer eventide now than it was. As a flood carried back to the sea, so doth the Lord's swift post, Time, carry you and your life with wings to the grave. Ye eat and drink, but Time standeth not still; ye laugh, but your day fleeth away; ye sleep, but your hours are reckoned and put by hand. (d) Oh, how soon will Time shut you out of the poor, and cold, and hungry inn of this life! and then what will yesterday's short-born pleasures do to you, but be as a snowball melted away many years since, or worse! for the memory of these pleasures useth to fill the soul with bitterness. Time and experience will prove this to be true; and dying men, if they could speak, would make this good. Lay no more on the creatures than they are able to carry. Lay your soul and weights upon God. Make Him your only best-beloved. Your errand to this life is to make sure an eternity of glory to your soul, and to match your soul with Christ. Your love, if it were more than all the love of angels in one, is Christ's due, other things worthy in themselves, in respect of Christ, are not worth a windle-straw, (e) or a drink of cold water. I doubt not but in death ye shall see all things more distinctly and that then the world shall bear no more bulk than it is worth, and that then it shall couch and be contracted into nothing: and ye shall see Christ longer, higher, broader, and deeper than ever He was. O blessed conquest (f) to lose all things and to gain Christ! alas! how poor is your gain if the earth were all yours in free heritage, holding it of any man of clay, if Christ be not yours! Oh, seek all mides, (g) lay all

oars in the water, put forth all your power, and bend all your endeavours to put away and part with all things that ye may gain and enjoy Christ. Try and search His word, and strive to go a step above and beyond ordinary professors, and resolve to sweat more and run faster than they do for salvation. Men's mid-day cold and wise courses in godliness, and their neighbour-like, cold and wise pace to heaven, will cause many a man to want his lodging at night, and to lie in the fields. I recommend Christ and His love to your seeking; and yourself to the tender mercy and rich grace of our Lord.

Remember my love in Christ to your wife. I desire her to learn to make her soul's anchor fast upon Christ Himself. Few are saved. Let her consider what joy the smiles of God in Christ will be, and what the love-kisses of sweet, sweet Jesus, and a welcome home to the new Jerusalem, from Christ's own mouth, will be to her soul, when Christ will fold together the clay tent of her body, and lay it by His hand (h) for a time, till the fair morning of a general resurrection. I avouch before God, man, and angel, that I have not seen, nor can imagine a lover to be comparable to lovely Jesus. I would not exchange or niffer (j) Him with ten heavens. If heaven could be without Him, what could we do there? Grace, grace be with you.

Your soul's eternal well-wisher

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.

*Foot Notes to the above.*

- (a) acquisitions.
- (b) To drink anything over the board, to formally renounce it, as a seller formerly did when he drank to the purchaser on delivery to him of the goods sold, and wished him luck in the purchase.
- (c) Awful.
- (d) Laid aside, as finished.
- (e) A rush. A windlestraw is a withered stalk-crested dog's-tail grass.
- (f) Acquisition.
- (g) Means.
- (h) Laid aside as having served its purpose.
- (j) Barter.

[There are various expressions used in the foregoing letter which many will undoubtedly deem legal; but if taken in the sense Rutherford intended, and according to the times in which he lived, and the regenerated state of the person to whom he wrote, this opinion will be softened down. It is searching and likely to do good to supine souls, although we should hardly feel justified in expressing ourselves in such terms. Nevertheless we view it as signifying no more than —“Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.”—THE EDITOR.]

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## RESIGNATION.

*"Not my will, but Thine be done."*

## A REPRINT.

"Thy will be done;" whate'er betide  
'tis best,  
In Thy safe keeping I can calmly rest;  
Nothing shall harm the lambs of Jesu's  
fold,  
Guarded by love unmeasured as untold.

If dark my path, I cannot, cannot fear,  
Whilst by such tender arms Thou  
draw'st me near;  
'Tis there I learn to know, close by  
Thy side,  
What 'tis to trust in Thee, e'en tho'  
Thou chide.

Past—Present—Future—All—is in  
Thy hand,  
Every event doth come at Thy command;

"All things shall work for good;"  
those I can't trace,  
I fain would leave, and lean upon Thy  
Grace.

Father! I would not take one step  
alone.  
Lead through this Wilderness Thy  
little one.  
May all my joys and all my sorrows be  
Blessings that draw me nearer unto  
Thee.

Thou Kindest of the kind, to Thee I  
flee,  
Mid earthly changes let me cling to  
Thee;  
Oh let me nestle 'neath Thy fond  
embrace,  
Resting till I shall see Thee face to  
face.

121, Kensington, Liverpool.

M. J. S. HODGES.

## LOVED, WASHED, AND DIGNIFIED.

A SERMON BY MR. GRACE.

*(Continued from page 275).*

Now there is another evidence, and that closes all I say. There is faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Saul was very zealous, as he thought; but it was not according to knowledge. The Lord met with him going to Damascus, and said to him, "Saul, Saul! why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And Saul, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Well, when the Lord appeared unto Ananias, He said unto him, "Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for, behold, he prayeth." Now, we have no evidence that that man prayed till he was quickened by

God the Holy Ghost. And in the same way the poor publican. Here are two characters in opposition to each other; the one resting on his good deeds. And perhaps there are some of you come up here, this morning, who think you can almost come up to him. That man's prayer was not prayer at all; it was telling the Lord what good things he had done for Him. But here is a poor man brought to the place of the stopping of mouths. And here is the turning point between the professors of the day and real possessors. One that really knows what it is to have the law brought home in its internal power. The law can never give life; it makes a poor sinner quake. It takes hold of him and binds him fast. But it is the blessed Spirit of God in the heart of that poor, quickened sinner that puts up a prayer, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." Ah, dear friends, if ever that prayer has gone up from your heart, depend upon it God has mercy in reserve for you. Because you have prayed? No, no: the Spirit of God makes intercession for you. He always prompts the poor sinner to lift up that prayer that He intends to answer. The Lord will have mercy; He is waiting to be gracious; "And blessed are all they that wait for Him."

"Now unto Him that loved us." I have been more particularly speaking of the love of God the Father, and the Holy Ghost in His quickening manifestations of love to a poor sinner; but this is an open manifestation of the love of Christ in the work of redemption. Christ entered into covenant with His Father that He would give full satisfaction for all the sins of all the election of grace; not one left behind. I tell you how it used to be with me when I heard such things as these. It always came short. I said, 'It is true; but have I any interest in them? I know that by His Own sacrifice He has for ever put away sin from the elect, and it never can be charged on them. But is it for me?' I would give God no rest till He had given me a feeling of it in my heart; but oh, as Mr. Hart says,—

"What wondrous grace was this!

We sinned, and Jesus died!

He wrought the righteousness,

And we were justified.

We ran the score to length extreme,

And all our debt was charged on Him!"

Well, now, He accepted at the hands of His Father, His church, His bride, and in the fulness of time;—on the very day, the very time appointed from everlasting—"God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law; that *they* might receive the adoption of sons." And in the eighth of Romans it is said: "For what the law could not do, in

that it was weak, through the flesh, God sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. Mark you, dear friends, in the *likeness* of sinful flesh—not sinful flesh *itself*. That shows the humiliation of Christ, the condescension of the Son of God, “that He passed by the nature of angels,” and took our nature. When? (as a godly man, an old divine, asks), When in its virginity, before Adam fell? No; He took the nature of the virgin, but “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;” and though made in the likeness of sinful flesh, what was it for? “That He might condemn sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

“Unto Him that loved us.” Christ’s love was manifested in taking our nature into union with His Divine person. Look at the Ancient of Days becoming an Infant of Days! And it is well for us when by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, we are led to consider the humiliation of Christ, and the wondrous love of Christ, when He became, as it were, an Infant of Days—born in a manger! Now come, poor tempted child of God; you perhaps are sometimes ready to say, ‘Well, I do think there is no one so tried and exercised as I am; I am thwarted and crossed in all I put my hand to. If I think I am going to do a little here or there, everything goes wrong.’ Look, for a moment, at the Lord of Life and Glory; everything at His beck and control; Who lives in the bosom of His Father, and yet becomes an Infant of Days—lies in a manger, where the horses and cattle lie; for His parents had no money to pay for a lodging when they went up to be taxed—there He was, laid in a manger; and, as Mr. Hart says,—

“The crowded inn, like sinners’ hearts,  
(O ignorance extreme!)  
For other guests of various sorts,  
Had room, but none for Him!

What a description of the state by nature of the human heart! Room for every abomination, but no room for the Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, here was love! He passed by the nature of angels, and took our nature upon Him. Now, if we trace the love of Christ,—all His days were days of suffering, and He is expressly called, “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;” and you never read in the scriptures of truth that Christ was ever seen to laugh: but He was seen to weep—a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief! All suffering and ignominy was cast upon Him in the day of God’s anger, when He calls for the sword of justice to awake against the Shepherd, against the Man that was God’s fellow. Here was His love!—His love from everlasting. Then we come to the open manifestation of it in the work of redemption for us poor sinners. “Who hath loved us.” Now we find when John

is speaking of His love, it is first recorded that "Jesus having loved His Own which were in the world, He loved them to the end." In the epistle to the Romans it is said, "Scarcely for a righteous man would one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." Just take notice how this reads: "Scarcely for a righteous man." Supposing that a good man did dare to die for another that was a good man; did he die to make expiation for his sin? Impossible! It must be love prompts him; and it must be great love to step in his shoes and die for him. But yet a man could never make an atonement for sin; not even by his death. "For, the redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." Now comes the sweet text, full of sweet breasts of consolation: "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Now, recollect, it is for some special and particular persons: and Christ, speaking to His disciples, says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Only look, my dear friends, and wonder with holy astonishment—"Friends!" But such was the case, that our blessed Jesus laid down His life for us—when?—when we were traitors, rebels, in open rebellion against Him! It was then He laid down His life for us.

"Unto Him that loved us." Now go and see what that love is. Look at Him in the garden of Gethsemane! when the weight of God's wrath alighted on Him, as the Head of His church; when that load must have sunk a thousand worlds to the lowest hell! But He came forth. He undertook as the Covenant Head, and He had strength to bear—and but strength to bear. "What shall I say? Father, remove this cup from Me." I think the passage ought rather to be read thus: "What! Shall I say, Father, remove this cup from Me? For this very end I came into the world." He came by covenant arrangement to fulfil it, and here we find that God did not spare His Son in the least; and not the least particle of that wrath due to the church of God but what was poured out on Him, and He suffered the full wrath of God for every sin that ever the church of God did commit, or ever would commit.

"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd; against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts; smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn My hand upon the little ones." He had signed His hand and could not go back; neither did He wish to do so; for it was love that brought Him to it, and carried Him through. But now trace Him a little further,—to Golgotha, to Calvary, where the cross was erected, that He at that time should render a perfect satisfaction. The sword of Divine justice was drawn from its scabbard. Here alone it was that that

sweet portion of God's word was fulfilled: "Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Here law and justice were satisfied. Here the election of grace was let go free.

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His Own blood." "Loved us!" says some poor sinner. "Loved me! What! was I included?" says some poor sensible sinner. "What! was my name enrolled in the Lamb's book of life? Was I one that was given to Him in covenant? What, me! a vile wretch, who have broken His laws, transgressed His commandments, gone such extreme lengths in iniquity as I have?" I would say, if there are present such characters as these, under a feeling sense of their being poor, perishing sinners, I would say, 'He died for you: and to redeem you from this present evil world.' Now a natural person can have no more conception of this than I have of Hebrew characters; none at all. But you know it is a perfect work. "He is a Rock, and His work is perfect." Nothing can be added to it or taken from it. All the sacrifices pointed to this one sacrifice. And it is said, after He had made satisfaction for ever. He sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high; and when He bowed His head He gave up the ghost and said, "It is finished!" He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Well, then, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And, therefore, "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. But God commendeth His love towards us in that, while we were enemies, Christ laid down His life for us."


"Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His Own blood." Particular emphasis is here laid; *our* sins in His *Own* blood; distinguishing His blood from all the blood of beasts and goats and bulls offered up under the old dispensation. They could never take away sin.

*(To be concluded, D.V., in our next.)*

## THE SONGS OF HEZEKIAH.

*"The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs on the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord."*—Isaiah xxxviii. 20.

### No. 2.

 HE gracious deliverance, which the Lord works for His people in this life, though perfect in their nature and degree, are not so complete as to secure against fresh trials and dangers. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous;



but the Lord delivereth him out of them all," is a declaration in which the great Head of the church and all His elect members equally participate. From time to time the Lord's hand has to be outstretched to reach and save His sinking ones; and His innumerable and diversified promises to His poor and needy serve powerfully to prove that they are often brought into such circumstances where His help is imperatively necessary.

Hezekiah had been saved from Sennacherib and his hosts; but another foe advanced against him with black banners and riding on a pale horse. Death followed by Hell advanced, in grim silence and with threatening looks. The tumour which had formed increased in size and malignity, weakened his physical powers, and left him prostrate. And

"Lo, the seer Isaiah came,  
With words to damp the expiring flame,  
And strike the dying dead:"

"Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live."

The king was evidently in a great strait; but while in an evangelical sense he knew Jehovah could not change His mind and purpose, he was also well aware that both he and his people were temporarily dealt with according to a national *conditional* covenant, which promised *life* to Jehovah's worshippers, and threatened *death* to apostates. On this fact Hezekiah relied, while casting himself on the free mercy of His God, and evidently not feeling sufficiently comfortable in his soul to welcome nature's dissolution; or unwilling to die before he had completed his reforming work. So turning his face to the wall he prayed: "Remember now, O Lord, I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight." We know the result: Hezekiah was restored. And it is our full conviction that he penned the cxvi. Psalm as a tribute to the healing grace experienced, just as he penned the cxv. on the occasion of the destruction of the Assyrian hosts. And how sweet are the opening words: "I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." *Vers. 1, 2.*

How rich the vein of vital godliness in the soul revealed in this language. The Lord is loved by His people—not as they are loved by Him, "FREELY," but—on the ground of what He does for them. Because His gracious ears receive their petitions and His almighty arm works salvation for them they love Him. Nor is it possible otherwise to feel any affectionate regard for the Holy One of Israel. The relation of the sinner to Him, in a legal sense, is

only capable of exciting dread. "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God"—knoweth Him as the God of salvation to Whom belong the issues from death. And every time He mercifully regards the prayers of His people in their distress, it arouses within them the holy resolution in all future troubles to make Him their refuge, and to appeal to Him alone.

It appears certain from what follows, that Hezekiah was not favoured with the joy of salvation or established in the sacred assurance that to him "to die *was* gain." He says, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow," *ver.* 3. This was productive of greater dismay than the threats of Sennacherib and the blasphemous confidence of Rabshakeh. For to a soul, sensible of the reality of the world to come, and the importance of being fit to appear before the final judgment seat of the unerring Heart-Searcher, no trouble and sorrow can be so great as to the prospect of being called to encounter death, without a firm and full persuasion, of interest in Him Who is "the Resurrection and the Life." But

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do;  
Bring relief in deepest straits."

"Upon the name of the Lord, the true God, Whose hand had laid his Assyrian foe in the dust, Hezekiah called in his distress. His words were the utterances of his over-burdened heart: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul:" and he was heard and answered. And now what says he of his Deliverer? "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and He helped me," *vers.* 5, 6. How low he was brought, we gather from Isaiah's record of his mental distress: I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will He break all my bones: from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter, I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me," Chap. xxxviii. 13, 14. This is to sink in deep waters; to stick fast in the horrible pit and miry clay; nor can free-will and duty-faith exist in such an ordeal. The Lord must undertake the great work of rescuing, otherwise the soul must perish in its affliction. And how grievously does the character of Jehovah shine forth in the eyes of His people, when He thus with outstretched arm exhibits His tender concern for their welfare in time, and their safety in eternity. Never had Hezekiah been brought so low; never had he been so helped. And a sense of his utter unworthiness appears to have deeply affected him on this account; as it does all God's people when thus

dealt with. He classes himself among the "simple" ones. And the original does not mean (as the word "simple" in Scripture sometimes does) the *sincere*—those *without guile*; but the *foolish*,—those who are *easily enticed* and *led astray*. And, as his conduct proved, in the case of the ambassadors sent from Babylon to enquire of his health, and the wonder God had wrought in the sending back the shadow of the sun ten degrees, the King shared largely in the common *foolish* tendency to be beguiled with flattery and ostentatious display. The words in the Psalm seem to acknowledge this, while he praises the Lord for His preserving power. Poor human nature! how little can it bear of prosperity without being inflated with pride and self-importance; and how little can it bear of adversity; without sinking in despondency. O it is well to be

"Neither lifted up with air;  
Nor dejected to despair:  
Always keeping Christ in view;  
He will bring us safely through."

Were the Lord to deal with any of His children "after their folly," His rod would never be off their backs. But He deals not with them after their sins; neither rewards them according to their iniquities. Nevertheless He so regulates His dispensations that He brings each one to cry, in remembrance of what they have been and are," O God, Thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from Thee." "So foolish was I, and so ignorant, I was as a beast before Thee."

"My foolishness I hate."

And thus "brought low" in spirit, as well as in circumstances, the help required is vouchsafed effectually, and grace in its sovereign freeness triumphs over all their worthlessness.

Now the dear man of God would fain be embosomed in the love of his Heavenly Friend and Redeemer: "Return," says he to his roving heart, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." The restless dove must return to the ark. There is no place for the sole of her foot on earth's waters. Sensible of his wanderings and wavering, this true-hearted heir of grace is constrained to acknowledge that *bountifulness* which the Lord had displayed in his restoration to health and vigour; adding: "For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling," ver. 8. And these are the three experimental essentials earnestly coveted by all who are taught of God the Spirit their need of Christ. For the soul to be delivered from the apprehension of eternal death, and the dread of bodily death, how blessed! The Lord to so sweetly and effectually reveal Him-

self and show His power in seasons of spiritual or temporal trial and distress, that He thus wipes away all tears from the eyes, how desirable! The feet that were slipping fast to be so upheld by mercy that they have not fallen by means of the tempting besetments of the pathway, what a cause for gratitude! In his very soul Hezekiah felt this, and we recognize in his words as recorded by Isaiah the very sentiment: "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back. Chap. xxxviii. 17. And he thus proceeds: "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Ver. 9.

That this "land of the living" meant in its direct signification in the mind of the king, earth, as the place where all the naturally living reside, in contrast with the grave, and its inhabitants, "the dead," we cannot doubt. For had he not said while sinking in his affliction, "I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, *in the land of the living*: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world"? Isaiah xxxviii. 11. And when his deliverance came, had he not exclaimed: "For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. *The living, the living*, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day"? *vers.* 18, 19. And yet in the reduplication of the words, "*The living, the living*," we may certainly trace a two-fold life as dwelling in the thoughts and heart of Hezekiah: for to every believer, physical life, if associated with a spiritual death in trespasses and sins, is not worthy the name.

"For life, without Thy love,  
No relish can afford;  
No, not a drop of real joy,  
Without Thy presence, Lord."


To "walk before the Lord in the land of the living," and as one of the *doubly*-living to praise Him, thus signifies to be found among His people, and to serve Him in all humility and with filial love and tender fear: thus "walking before Him," as a child of that Abraham, to whom the Lord said, while his name was yet Abram, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." Gen. xvii. 1. "Perfect!" and in what sense? "PERFECT IN LOVE," tormenting fear being cast out. 1 John iv. 18; this, therefore, is that perfection to which all God's children are exhorted to aspire, that the chains of legal bondage may be removed, and they view Jehovah as their covenant God and Father, and not under the hidings of His face conclude that His mercy is clean gone for ever, and that He hath forgotten to be gracious, and in anger hath shut up His tender mercies. And in this "*walking*

*before Him,"* what jealousy will there be for His honour and glory, while self is crucified, the world lightly esteemed, and everything that savours not of Christ is trodden under foot.

THE EDITOR.

(To be continued).

### "HOLD MY HANDS TIGHTLY."

 THE following occurred between myself and own daughter, a fair curly-haired little girl of then three summers. The little one was suffering from a severe cough, and her papa gave her some medicine. After tasting it, she said, "I don't want it, mamma, I can't drink it," pushing the glass from her. I said, "Dear papa knows best, darling, and it's to cure your cough." She answered, "I don't want any medicine at all, I don't; 'tis nasty medicine." "Very well," I said, "leave it on the table, but you are grieving papa." In a moment (while trying hard to keep back the big tears) she said, "Yes, mamma dear, I WILL take it; I don't want to vex my papa. You hold the glass for me and hold both my hands tight." After drinking it, she said, "Wipe my eyes, I such a silly little dirl to cry; kiss me again, mamma, I not cry next time."

What a lesson this incident teaches every child of God. Our loving and wise Father oftentimes sends His children trials of various kinds, personal weakness, domestic affliction, bereavement, denial of something upon which they had set their hearts, or it may be, the Father has withdrawn the realization of His presence and favour, and there are numberless *little* crosses making up every-day experiences. Be it what it may, crosses great or small (and what is a cross to one is no trial to another) we frequently want, as the little one with the medicine, to push it away, or to take it *just now*. Our Father loves too wisely, too fondly, to allow His children to have their own way, and often, when we find no way of escape, we cry, "Dear Jesus, let me realise Thy presence, come quite close, be so near, so dear, that all else shall be as nothing. Make me very patient, anxious to do and suffer *all* Thy will. Help me to learn the lesson Thou art teaching. *Take my hand in Thine*, give me child-like faith, and may I in some feeble measure reflect Thine image, that Thou mayest be glorified."

Then, when entirely submissive, passive, anxious to know no will but *His*, we find that the trial, the cross, becomes light, because cheered and sustained with His loving sympathy and presence. And how we chide our littleness of faith and, as the little child said, "How silly I was, I not cry again," so we resolve never to doubt or distrust our loving Father in His dealings towards us. But

as with the child, the next dose of medicine brings the tears and folly again. So it is with God's people, as foolish and unbelieving as ever, and yet loving children withal.

May we daily, hourly, seek to live in close communion with our precious Jesus. May His Holy Spirit lead us into all truth, helping us to realize at all times, be our path in life rough or smooth, (and our *Father* knoweth which is best and safest) that all things are working together for our good and His glory.

Liverpool.

C. SCOTT.

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### THEOLOGY IN AMERICA.

(Continued from page 288.)

*Jonathan*—Well, Joseph, I see but little chance of converting you, so long as you hold those opinions. I guess those are the dangerous doctrines we have so often been warned to avoid in America. However, I can but try, if I fail, to open your eyes and soften your heart. And I assure you there shall be nothing wanting, as regards my logical powers to effect this great work, as I believe it will add no little to the revenue of our praise. But accepting the privileges and pleasures of such an endowment, we cannot avoid the acceptance of its concomitants and consequences. To be free, is to be responsible; to be capable of distinguishing and knowing between right and wrong, is to be accountable. Life on earth is a scene of probation. To every man there is allotted a task. On every one there is an obligation to work out an appropriate character: according to this character is present peace and also future felicity. If we spend our lives in the love and service of Him, the God over all, Who has made us, and endowed us as we are, we secure for ourselves thorough and abiding well-being; but if we disregard and disobey Him, we secure for ourselves a heritage of misery. That our choice may be made manifest, and that an appropriate allotment may be assigned us, there is coming a period of examination and award—an hour when the Lord shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. On no subject is the testimony of the sacred scriptures more explicit and emphatic than on this. Everywhere they either declare or assume that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God; that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ; that Jehovah hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained: and that amid the appalling sublimities of that day, the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and the books shall be opened; and the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books according to their works.

*Joseph*—I know not how it is, but really, Jonathan, I fear you have almost got out of your depth,—or, rather, so far in deeps so profound,—that it behoves you to be cautious; but perhaps you can swim, if so, you may escape being drowned. Please excuse me. But if your sophistical acumen could be auctioned off to the best bidder, there is a fortune for you the moment the hammer drops. When men are theologically wrong, both in head and heart, at the commencement of their religious career, we think it is no wonder, if they are given up to “their own delusions,” if grace prevent not. Intellectual endowments give a large amount of pleasure; being only the privilege of some, not the common lot of all. Besides, there are but few but what would rejoice in the acceptance of all the attendants that necessarily follow. “To be free is to be responsible.” Strange logic! quite in strict keeping with all the rest; just as if you had said, “To be free is to be bound.” Let us look at the scriptural meaning of what it is “to be bound.” In the first place, God’s people are bound fast under sin, guilt, Satan, and law; the cords of their sins are the bands or pinions that bind them;—they fall down where there is none to help. For in this condition they cannot help themselves, nor give a ransom for a brother. This is bondage with a witness; and in this state they become chafed and sore with murmuring, until they are like “a wild bull in a net.” The cord that binds them is called “affliction and iron,” because of its tightness and strength. And, like the solitary hart when wounded, “they all mourn apart”—“mourn sore like doves,” and mourn as deeply as those who are “in bitterness for their first-born;” their lips quiver, and their belly trembles; and under a “freewill” surfeit they cry out with Jonah, “Out of the belly of hell cried I.” “Salvation is of the Lord.” This takes place under a feeling sense of their utter incapacity to do anything for themselves. But what is it “to be free?” It is to be unfettered—not to “be responsible,” as you say, but to be delivered from the galling yoke of sin, Satan, law, wrath, guilt and condemnation, by the application of Christ’s love, blood, grace, and righteousness, by the power of God the Holy Ghost, to a broken heart and sin-smitten conscience. They are now free born. “Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John i. 13). “If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John viii. 36). The way I have just described is the way God brings His Own people, according to the truth of His word, and the incontrovertible testimony of tens of thousands.

Now, my friend Jonathan, will you have the goodness to compare notes. I dare say you would scorn a road like

this, having trod your beautiful macadamized Methodist Episcopal Church so long. Well, we are now compelled to glance at your probation scheme. What a mercy to have the Bible unfettered ! What an energetical go-between you are—a willing something “between right and wrong”—an accountable probationer, on trial, in order to see what you would turn out to be. As if the all-wise, infinite, unerring Creator could not foresee what He should make, and what it would be at after He had made it ! Doth not the infallible word declare, “I knew that thou wouldest deal treacherously from the womb.” “He that teacheth man knowledge shall not He know ?” “The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.” When the Lord speaks of proving and trying, it is not on His own account ; there is no deficiency in His knowledge or foreknowledge (1 Peter i. 2) ; but the foreknowledge of God and His Divine sovereignty you ignore altogether. I can understand what it is in the way of trade, when men take slaves on trial or probation for a given time, and should they not prove according to what they have been represented, they have been returned. The same with horses : and precisely the same with Methodist Episcopal Church preachers. If they have not come up to your orthodox standard, have you not returned them, or sent them back to your own schools at Jericho until their beards have grown a little longer ? although they themselves grow no wiser through the instrumentality of their teachers in *God’s plan of salvation*, which accounts for this long string of “accountableness” of yours. Here you speak of an “allotted task” “to work out an appropriate character.” If I am not mistaken, you have got your work cut out for you here, Jonathan. This would be a problem for Euclid, and such a task for Jonathan that he never undertook in his life, and one that is certain to be left unfinished, though he tugs and toils at it until he takes his last gasp. When you have worked out this appropriate character, which I suppose is perfection in the flesh—if ever you do mend that—for the sake of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and all the professing world, by all means get it photographed (if it costs your Conference a shilling) lest it fade or vanish away, for you would never see the like again. And my reason for wishing you to do this is, simply, because I know such appropriate, task-working, image-making, responsables, accountables, probations, obligations, &c., will neither stand wind nor weather, wash nor wear. Such aërial bridges are only the workmanship of spiders, or like that man-made (for the most part) religious mania in 1859 and 1860, and which soon evaporated like the exhalations of a lake, or like a gossamer carried away in the wind. Do you remember this, Jonathan ?

*(To be continued.)*

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## OUR HELP AND SHIELD.

*"He is our help and our shield."*—Psalm xxxiii. 20.

I long so much—so very much—  
To serve my Lord aright;  
'Gainst Satan's tight relentless clutch  
I struggle day and night:  
And yet at times so weak am I,  
I cannot fight, I only sigh,  
And beg that He my help would be  
And from the tempter set me free.

I oft have thought that, had I birth  
In those glad days of yore,  
When He, our Lord, was here on earth  
To save us evermore;  
And had I sat at His dear feet,  
My happiness had been complete,  
That I had never caused Him pain  
By sinning o'er and o'er again.

Aug. 14th, 1881.


But when I think on Peter's fall,  
And ponder Judas' crime,  
I feel the weakness of it all,  
And see that, in all time,  
Whate'er our state, whate'er our place  
If He but hides from us His face,  
We cannot on our strength rely,  
We sink in sin, and sinning die.

Then, oh, my God, look down in love,  
And guide my faltering feet  
To that blest path that leads above,  
To Thy sweet mercy seat:  
What can we fear, if but Thou'lt guide  
Our steps? and, let what else betide,  
We're free from Satan and alarms  
While sheltered by Thy loving arms.

G. L.

## HEAVEN AND HELL VERSUS PURGATORY.

*"Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"*—JOB xiv. 10.

HAT says revelation upon the question, "Where is he?" If I look the precious Word of God through, I find a description of a scene of bliss or a scene of woe awaiting mortals, but I find not one word about a purgatory. The devil coined that wicked, crafty, money-getting notion, to cram down the throats of Popish priests,—and they did not want much cramming, but swallowed it down greedily. They know it is a fable and a lie, but "by this craft they have their wealth." My Bible knows of no such thing. The contrast is set down by my blessed Lord in the death of the Christian and the worldling. Lazarus died, and was at once "carried by angels to Abraham's bosom," without dropping him into any limbo on the way. The rich man died, and found no place out of which the Popish priests could pray him; but it is said immediately, "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Now if I were to give you no other scripture than this, does it not amount to demonstration, that all idea about an intermediate state is a perfect fable, a ridiculous invention, a cunning piece of priestcraft for the duping of the multitude; and that the Word of God in asking the question, "Where is he?" holds out no other prospect, than that he is either in heaven, or in hell? in the glory prepared for him or in the despair that awaited him? But let me just add to this the declaration of the Saviour relative to the thief upon the cross. He cries for mercy; he pleads with Jesus to "remember him when He comes into His kingdom." He feels his ruin, and

asks for the salvation that is in Christ; and Jesus does not say in reply, "You are an old and notorious sinner, a hardened and wicked wretch; and you have not had an opportunity of confessing to a priest, and he has not given you absolution, and therefore you must go to purgatory for forty or fifty years, and then if your relatives can find money enough to pray you out, I may perhaps admit you to heaven." Instead of that He says, "*To-day* shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." Then if we ask of man, that dieth and wasteth away, "Where is he?" he is with Christ in Paradise—or he is with demons in despair.

<b>Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,</b> Hang on His firm decree; <b>He sits on no precarious throne,</b> Nor borrows leave TO BE.	Chained to His throne a volume lies, With all the fates of men; With every angel's form and size Drawn by the eternal pen.
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His providence unfolds the book,  
 And makes His counsels shine;  
 Each opening leaf, and every stroke  
 Fulfils some deep design.—WATTS.

## Letters by the Household of Faith.

LETTER BY THE LATE MR. G. STEDMAN.

Robertsbridge, July 15th, 1880.

Dear Friend,—Hope you are favoured to see the difference "between him that serveth God and he who serveth Him not," as Obadiah had it given him to do. The formalist, is portrayed in Esau and his offspring (Edom), who is called "Jacob's brother"—born of the same mother, and begotten by the same father. Even so God giveth gifts to servants still, as well as to sons. Jacob spake of all the Lord did for them in Egypt as to brethren; but lived to prove he was casting pearls before swine, and casting bread to a dog (Numbers xx. 14-21). Wherefore Israel turned away from him, as Paul admonishes Timothy to turn away from those under the gospel who had a form of godliness but denied the power of it. "None are to remain of Esau" (Obadiah 18). "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance; and there shall be holiness, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." Esau is one-twelfth of Jacob's house.

These tribes of Jacob are extant in the regenerated of the Lord at this day. *Reuben*—"vision of a son:" even Christ revealed in the heart. *Simeon*—"he that hears, obeys, and is heard." *Levi*—"joined"—joined to the Lord. *Judah*—"praise:" "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise."

*Zebulun*—"dwelling:" one in whom God dwells, and he dwells in God. *Issachar*—"reward or recompence:" one who has believed the gospel and is recompensed by the witnessing of the Holy Spirit promised, whereby he is sealed unto eternal redemption. *Dan*—"he that judges or judgment." The sinner who judges himself by God's rule, and so is not condemned with the world. Yea, judges all things himself, but is judged of none. He bows to no judgment or sentence save that of God: "Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence." *Gad*—"a band; happy; one armed and prepared." The soul is indeed happy, even when embedded in miseries, when Christ blesses him. Blessed be ye poor,—mourners, hungerers, and thirsters after righteousness; meek, persecuted, and falsely accused. These are the happy ones, and these are fully armed with effective weapons too: although to sight and sense they are just the reverse. Yes, they live by faith and not by sight. *Asher*—"blessedness or happiness." Ah, do not these flourish in abundance in love! "Happy is the man whom God correcteth." Whom He loves He chastens. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. Oh, these sweet blessings come down to us, shall I say, strained through these dark clouds. *Naphtali*—"my wrestling." Have not you and I something or things of our own which we had to wrestle hard for? Aye, choice things too; though the bringing them forth was sore travail. *Joseph*—"adding," "increase." He was indeed a Nazarene; a branch in feeling separated from the stock and other branches by the branches themselves for 24 or 25 years. What, a withered branch add and increase? Sense and reason, aided by human nature, says, Nay, impossible; but God, and true faith too, confirm the thing in the soul. One more of the household—little *Benjamin*—"the son of my right hand." His mother called him *Benoni*—"the son of my sorrow"—our sorrows, and the deepest, yield the son of our right hand. The right hand denotes strength or power. Is not the joy of the Lord our strength? Does not this spring to us out of sorrows; and the deeper they are the greater the joy? These constitute the House of Jacob, who are to possess their possessions; while Jacob is to be a fire and Joseph (i.e., the houses of these respectively) a flane, and Esau's house to be as stubble; and they shall kindle in them and devour them, according to Malachi i. 4.

I must confess I have been almost wicked enough at times to let in something like this to my heart respecting this short prophecy: It is no use reading this scripture. But, O what does it contain? A full, solemn and terrible, yet glorious account of professor and profane; of those who fear God and those who fear Him not.

Those who know the power of godliness and they who only know and are content with the form. And I often am inquiring, What am I? Which side am I? And am obliged to rest sometimes when challenged, on this word: "The foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His."

G. STEDMAN.

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LETTER BY A TRIED PILGRIM.

Friday, Jan. 3rd, 1857.

My beloved Christian Brother,

I feel disposed to write you a few words this morning, having time on my hands. My mind has been impressed with the account of the Lord's dealings toward you, which you gave me on Tuesday night last; and I cannot but feel impressed with the impending fulfilment of the purpose of the Eternal God made known, unto you his servant concerning your appointed position as an ambassador of Christ. My poor, feeble, ignorant mind, alas, is often so much perplexed with itself and its lack of revelation in the "knowledge of Jesus," that these wonderful displays of the Lord's covenant designs seem too high for me, and I cannot attain unto them, yet I desire to rejoice in the wondrous grace and favour shown towards you, and hail with unfeigned joy the word of the Lord going forth with power, savour and eternal success from your mouth, as His Spirit shall give you utterance. O may you feel much of His presence, and be anointed with all that grace and unction of the Lord the Spirit which you stand in need of, and may He grant you sweet evidence that He is your strength and shield, and all your salvation.

I feel much interested as to your grandfather's state,—whether he has left the body or no, and should like to know if that has taken place, according to the intimation given to him. What an unspeakable mercy to have a desire to depart and be with Christ, to be prepared to appear in the presence of God, saved from sin, and fear, and guilt, and shame—accepted in the Beloved! When shall I attain to this? I often ask myself: but the Lord is a God of judgment, and I desire to wait for Him to do all things for me according to His sovereign will.

Another year having commenced, I am reminded how short the time has been since I sent you a few words of salutation upon the opening of the last, and while reviewing what has been my course and the Lord's dealings, I must endeavour, like Paul in olden time,

to "thank God and take courage," with the strong conviction of our dear poet :

"Weak in myself—in Him I'm strong,"  
His Spirit's voice I hear ;  
The way I walk cannot be wrong,  
If Jesus be but there."

On New Year's morn I was musing upon Hart's words—

"No trifling gift or small,  
Should friends of Christ desire :  
Rich Lord, bestow on all  
Pure gold well tried by fire :  
Faith that stands fast when devils roar,  
And love that lasts for evermore."

To this I could add my hearty Amen—and pray that this year may be fraught with blessings from above and great grace and mercy to us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Whenever you *can* make an opportunity, do favour me with a visit ; or if that is not practicable, may I crave a few lines,—however few, does not matter, though I highly prize every sentence I receive just to let me know how you are—and concerning your experience in preaching Christ. I must conclude my feeble note praying the Lord to be with you and bless you, and your dear mother and relatives in the kingdom of grace. My partner joins me in kindest regards,

Your affectionate Christian brother,  
T. A. WILLIAMS.

Mr. A. J. Baxter.

[The above was written to us just after the Lord had brought us out into the ministry, and when the dear aged relative referred to (who for twenty years sat under Mr. Huntigton) was passing away to his eternal rest.—THE EDITOR.]

## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION.—"As God is the author of His law and word, so He is the best interpreter of it. The Scripture having an impress of Divine wisdom, holiness, and goodness, must be regarded according to that impress with a submission and meekness of spirit and reverence of God in it. But when, in our enquiries into the word, we enquire not of God but consult flesh and blood, the temper of the times wherein we live, or the satisfaction of a party we side withal, and impose gloss upon it according to our own fancies, it is to put laws upon God, and make self the rule of Him. He that interprets the law to bol-

ster up some eager appetite against the will of the law-giver, ascribes to himself as great an authority as He that enacted it."

CHARNOCK.

Perhaps many that sit under my poor ministry will recollect some of the observations here brought together which they have heard by word of mouth in my evening lectures. I write as I speak without much attention to style or manner, and if God, the Holy Ghost, Whose blessed office it is to glorify Christ, should graciously condescend to bless this little work when I am no more; and if any of those among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God should, as they read these lines after my decease, call to mind what they have heard in my personal ministry and say:—"We remember those words as they came warm from his heart, which we now read, while his ashes are mouldering in the grave," the very thought comforts my soul in the moment of writing.

HAWKER.

PRAYER.—"When God saith unto thee, Ask what thou wilt, what wilt thou ask? It is not anyone, but Almighty God that said, Ask what thou wilt (Matt. vii. 7). If of possessions thou art a lover, thou wilt desire the whole earth, that all who are born may be thy husbandmen, or thy slaves. And what when thou hast possessed the whole earth? Thou wilt ask the sea, in which yet thou can'st not live. In this greediness the fishes will have the better of thee. But perhaps thou wilt possess the islands. Pass over these also; ask the air, although thou can'st not fly; stretch thy desires even unto the heavens, call thine own the sun, the moon, and the stars, because He who made all said, Ask what thou wilt: yet nothing wilt thou find more precious, nothing wilt thou find better, than Himself Who made all things. Him seek, Who made all things, and in Him and from Him shalt thou have all things that He made. All things are precious, because all things are beautiful; but what more beautiful than He? Strong are they; but what more strong than He? And nothing would He give thee rather than Himself. If ought better thou hast found, ask it. If thou ask ought else thou wilt do wrong to Him and harm to thyself by preferring to Him that which He made, when He would give to thee Himself Who made." AUGUSTINE on the Psalms.

THE BETTER INHERITANCE.—As for bodily health or strength, worldly peace or prosperity, gains or projects, riches or honours, favour or affection, kindness or civil treatment from this world, let it not be once expected nor once mentioned among you as becometh saints;

for these things are not in the covenant; they are no part of the better inheritance; for these things are seen, but the great reward is not seen; these are temporal, but the portion is eternal. But is there no better reward for present services, even in this life, than temporal things? Oh, yes! His favour is better than life itself, and His countenance as a cloud of the latter rain, which often distils precious drops, which serve to soften the clods, and prepare it for the reception of the word of life. Let us glory in our infirmities, for these keep us from confidence in the flesh; let us glory in reproaches, for these keep us from having fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness; for he that is a friend of the world is the enemy of God. When the outward man decays, "the inward man is renewed day by day." And even bodily pains are intended to eject us out of this earthly house, that we may be admitted into our house that is from above, where the inhabitant shall no more say, "I am sick." And knowing we have such a hope, what have we to fear, seeing that our whole work is to cleave to Christ, to follow, and to endeavour to please conscience? How can we be poor that have God for our portion? This is not our rest, because it is polluted; this is not our home or our dwelling-place, and we are called strangers, pilgrims, and wayfaring men. We know we have turned the corner, gained the summit, and are going down the hill; the valley of the shadow of death is at the bottom, then comes Jordan, and on the other side is the chief mountain, the fountain of life, and the everlasting hills. Set your heart on this heavenly country, where we shall see our best Beloved, and enjoy each other's company and conversation for evermore. The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed us to the full, fill us with light from His sweet face, and with love, joy, and peace from His heart.

W. HUNTINGTON, S.S.


A NEEDS-BE.—If, then, in the Divine wisdom there is a "needs be" for a path of tribulation, happy are we if we are, through God's teaching, in this path. You think sometimes that you could bear any trial but that which is laid upon you. But, depend upon it, God has selected out of the variety of manifold trials and temptations that very trial which shall most suit your state and circumstances. Take another word of the apostle to encourage you. They are but "for a season." Is it not far better for you to be a poor, despised, afflicted, tempted saint of God, with the faith of God's elect in your heart, and the kingdom of God in your breast, pressing and struggling on through a sea of difficulties to reach the heavenly shore, and to take possession of that glorious inheritance, than enjoy all that the world could lay at your feet?

J. C. PHILPOT.

## ESSAYS ON HART'S HYMNS.—LVII.

## HYMN 53.

*Faith is the Victory.*

AITH, in its relation to the finished work of Christ, can never be too clearly understood. It is using almost stereotyped phraseology to say that, never was it (in proportion to the population) less properly apprehended than in our day; but it is nevertheless only too true. And the result is seen, when carefully examined, to be far more solemn than is generally imagined. For that result proves to be this: The setting forth of a Jesus Christ in name, Who in person and work is not "the Son of the Father in truth and love," while the faith, of which so much is said and written, is neither the gift nor work of God the Spirit, and therefore not that of His elect, nor saving in its nature.

These are strong assertions, but there is little difficulty in substantiating them. And if so, what delusion can be compared with that now so prevalent? It was the nearest approach of Paganism to the worship of Jehovah that was the most effective in leading Israel into idolatry. "They feared the Lord (JEHOVAH), and served their own gods," is the scathing word of exposure concerning this evil, 2 Kings xvii. 33-41. And this marked the mongrel worship of the Samaritans; of which our Lord said to the woman at the well, "Ye worship ye know not what," John iv. 22. To be worshipped in Spirit and in truth, the Lord must reveal His Son in the heart and understanding, Gal. i. 15, 16. "Ignorance," to Rome's children, may be "the mother of devotion," but in Jehovah's Zion, it is SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE that is so. "This is life eternal," said Jesus in His prayer to the Father, "that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent," John xvii. 3, while the beloved Apostle affirms: "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life," 1 John v. 20.

In the little hymn now before us we shall perceive that Mr. Hart uses very guarded language in its opening lines. Doubtless he had in view the peril we have named, and which always prevails in the greatest degree in a day of religious excitement, such as is invari-



ably associated with "Revivals," and which existed in his time, led on by Whitefield and Wesley. Let us observe his words :

"Whoe'er believes aright  
In Christ's atoning blood,  
Of all his guilt's acquitted quite,  
And may draw near to God." *Verse 1.*

Is there then a *wrong* way of believing ? and if so, how is it to be distinguished ? No child of God will challenge the importance of these two questions. Personal anxiety to be *right* will urge all who feel the solemn importance of soul matters, to desire a clear answer to them. And why should our poet speak of *believing* "*aright*," if there were no danger of that which is the reverse ? If "there is a way that *seemeth right* unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," Prov. xiv. 12, there is no sense in which this is so likely to be verified as in a religious sense, and in the great point of FAITH it rises before us in all its vital importance.

The only way in which the sterling nature of faith can be known is by its effects ; even as we judge of the good or bad tree by the absence, or presence, and quality of the fruit. And those effects are absolutely and indivisibly associated with

"Christ's atoning blood."

To view that blood in a superficial or hap-hazard light is utterly derogatory to the dignity of Christ's person. As One of the Divine Persons in the glorious Trinity, and the One Who was specially appointed by the Father in His everlasting love to His people for the purpose of redeeming them to God by His blood, the eternal Son is not to be lightly regarded in His character of Jesus Christ. As "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," He claims co-equal honour with the Father who sent Him. And as the pouring forth of His blood was so effectual to the accomplishment of the great designs of grace in salvation that it is declared, "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12, it is evident that the Father has eternally accepted His one offering for sin, and affirms, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied," Isa. liii. 11.

It is thus the atonement (by which the church is reconciled unto God) is exclusively the fruit of Christ's blood-shedding, while His righteousness (in His perfect obedience to all the demands of the law) is to stand immovable while creatures all pass away, and when

the heavens and earth undergo their final change, Isa. li. 6, 8. On Him alone, therefore, salvation depends for merit, and upon the Holy Spirit for all preparation fitness. "Salvation is of the Lord;" in its provision, accomplishment and revelation. Faith, of and in itself has no merit, nor (if genuine) pretends to have any. It took no part in the great work of the Surety of the everlasting covenant. It offered no atonement, it made no peace with law and justice, nor can it. The blood of Christ alone claims that honour. Faith receives the knowledge and enjoyment of the atonement from the Spirit's inward witnessing of Christ, and it is dependent on that witnessing for all it realizes.

By the eye of this spiritual grace, Christ and His atoning blood are beheld invested with the highest dignity and the greatest power. He that has prevailed to receive the book from the hand of God the Father, and to loose its seven sacred seals, is looked upon as no impotent person, but as having all power given unto Him in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 8; power over all flesh that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him, John xvii. 2. To be interested in His death, and held in the keeping of His hand, are felt to be the grand security of the soul for ever. The claims of His blood, as having put away all sin, are regarded as irresistible, as the answer to all legal charges, and the accusations of Satan and conscience. By its justice-satisfying agency, faith believes there is boldness granted to enter into the very holiest, Heb. x. 19: *i.e.*, when the Holy Spirit is pleased to apply it and to sprinkle the heart from an evil conscience: and faith is assured that all who are justified by the shedding of that blood shall be saved from wrath through Him, Rom. v. 9.

The Lord Jesus and His sacrificial work are thus exalted in the estimation of every one who

"believes aright  
In His atoning blood,"

to that pre-eminence which gives weight and solidity to their views and feelings with respect to the atonement and its efficacy, which may be looked for in vain among the ready singers and noisy shouters who make it a theme of the lips, while their belief is that the Lord has so arranged matters that that atonement should have no influence with Him, unless the creature give it

validity by an effort of the will and self-wrought credence. They name Jesus, they sing of Jesus, they pray in His name, but it is not the Jesus Whom God hath "exalted with His right hand a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins."

Now

"Whoe'er believes aright  
In Christ's atoning blood,  
Of all his guilt's acquitted quite,  
And may draw near to God."

That is, such a believer possesses the indubitable evidence that his guilt has been purged away by the shedding of that blood. He is cleared and exonerated from all law-charges, and as God has no account standing against him, he, feeling this,

"May draw near to God,"

"having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." This perfect justification and acquittal it will be seen rests entirely on the ground of the *past* atonement. The *present* access by the faith of Jesus, is wholly attributable to the work and witness of the Holy Spirit: as it is written: "In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him," Eph. iii. 12. "For through Him we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Chap. ii. 18.

"But sin will still remain ;  
Corruptions rise up thick ;  
And Satan says the med'cine's vain,  
Because we yet are sick." Verse 2.

But where does *sin remain*? Not in the book of law-accounts before the Lord, for the precious blood of Christ has put it away for ever out of the sight of infinite justice. It *remains* in the nature which every redeemed soul derives from carnal birth. It *remains* also on the conscience of every soul convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit's revelation of the law in its spirituality, until removed by the application of the Saviour's "atoning blood." And even when purged away from the conscience it "will still remain" in the nature, and in the most exemplary show its presence and power at times, in the temper, words, and ways. The scripture biography of every saint confirms this, as does the life-history, and experience

of all the Lord's children of modern times ; "for in many things we offend all," James iii. 2. And the great enemy of souls, as "the accuser of the brethren," is not slow to avail himself of the knowledge he possesses of the sinfulness of the flesh, to suggest to those who writhe under the lash of a guilty conscience and the uprisings of a depraved heart, that there is no proof that the "medicine," the balm of Gilead, is in *their* case a remedy. If Jesus were their healer, would they thus be sick ? Did not each of those who was healed physically by Him, receive a cure so complete in itself as to be perfectly delivered from the malady with which they were previously infected ? With respect to sin-purgation, it is not so. The disease still rankles in the body of sin and death after the conscience has felt the good Physician's touch, and heard the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." How can this be reconciled ? It is plain, suggests the tempter, that

"The medicine's vain,  
Because we yet are sick."

But there is an answer to all this special pleading of the adversary. Those whom the Saviour healed, were not thereby freed from all liability to future bodily ailments, or even physical death. "A worse thing" might befall some who had been set free from sore infirmities. And as it has pleased the Lord, for some wise end, even the magnifying of sin-subduing grace, not to remove sin out of His people's mortal frames till they revert to dust and arise renewed in the resurrection morn, the blood of Christ does its work effectually by the Spirit's power, as the soul's "medicine," in removing the guilt of sin from the conscience, as the sure earnest of the future perfect emancipation of both soul and body from the dominion and indwelling of all corruption. Let the devil, therefore, urge what he may, we may reply with our beloved poet :

"But all this will not do,  
Our hope's on Jesus cast ;  
Let all be liars, and Him be true,  
We shall be well at last." *Verse 3.*

The earnest of this certain assurance is possessed by all who "have received the atonement," and all those elders who "obtained a good report through faith," died in the faith of it. The great

mystery of the co-existence of sin and grace in the same person, and of the incessant warfare arising from it, may not be clearly apprehended by all the Lord's people, but the great fact is indisputable by them. Hence the chief point worthy of attainment by them is, the knowledge of an interest in the "atoning blood." Whoever is privileged to realize this, apprehends the certainty of everlasting life. All who oppose this, whether devils or men, are to be accounted "liars," for their antagonism to the sayings of the Lord Jesus, Who thus testifies: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die," John xi. 26. "If a man keep My saying (*i.e.*, cleaves to the Word of the truth of the Gospel) he shall never see death," chapter viii. 51. But not to lose sight of the idea put forth by Mr. Hart, of being healed by the medicine compounded of the blood, righteousness and grace of the Lord Jesus, and yet still to find

"Corruptions rise up thick,"

coupled with the God-wrought assurance that

"We shall be well at last,"

all this is borne out by the dear Saviour's words, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you," John xv. 3. For the then *present* and *after* infirmities of the Apostles had no effect upon the power of that healing which they had experienced. In confirmation of which, let the following language of Paul be observed, in which the deep sense he possessed of the abounding of sin in his flesh, together with his final deliverance, is unmistakeably expressed: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin," Rom. vii. 24, 25. No sentence could more clearly demonstrate the correctness of our poet's assertion relative to himself and all the Lord's cleansed but sin-plagued children (let Satan impugn it as he may),

"We shall be well at last."

THE EDITOR.

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## LOVED, WASHED, AND DIGNIFIED.

A SERMON BY MR. GRACE.

*(Concluded from page 305).*

Now we come to the washing. I consider this washing signifies purging; for in the scripture I read to you, "almost all things under the law were purged by blood." This was a washing, purging, or cleansing from sin. Now this was done entirely in the eternal purpose of Jehovah; and, as a good man says—I won't contradict him—God the Father was the first that trusted in Christ; gave Him credit for the accomplishment of what He had undertook to do from everlasting. And He has viewed His church from everlasting as "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," as in Christ. But in the fulness of time it was that He was to accomplish that which He had undertaken to do. And this washing signifies that He removed in one day the iniquities of His church, so that when sought for, they shall not be found. Why so? Because they are cast into the depths of the sea. Now there are some parts in the deep ocean where no bottom can be found. And here they are sunk where they can never be found; for the love of God is an ocean without bottom or shore; and here it is that the sins of God's people are cast. In that day the iniquities of His people shall be sought for, and not found. What day is that? The day of atonement. It is thus Christ's having made satisfaction for the sins of His people in the day of atonement, they were washed away, and shall never be brought to the remembrance of God the Father. Well but, say you, this is a long way off. Bless God, if it is so, if you are not satisfied without the power of it. Thousands of the people in this metropolis are satisfied without this. It is a clear truth; but to have a personal application of this is what the people of God are not satisfied without.

"Washed us from our sins in His own blood." Now, we read that the priest made atonement for sin, and the high priest went once a year into the holiest of all to make atonement for sin. But our great High Priest has made atonement for sin once for all. This washing certainly sets forth that there is a need of washing. If there is a need of washing, there must be a filthiness by nature, and it is by the first teaching of God the Holy Ghost we get to know this. By the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, the church speaks of this: "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf." Turn again to Isaiah vi.: "Woe," says he, "is me, for I am undone." What is the matter? what is the cause? "Because I am a man of unclean lips." How came you to know it, Isaiah? "Mine eyes

have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." If you have a discovery of this, the holiness, righteousness, and purity of God has thus brought you to see that you are a poor unclean sinner. Well, then, this is antecedent to washing, dear friends. And if we are not brought to see our filthiness by nature, we shall never duly appreciate this washing by the blood of Christ. We need a washing in the fountain of His precious blood.

There is a threefold washing, two of which do not particularly refer to the washing of my text. In the epistle to Titus, there is "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." And in Ephesians v. you read: "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church." What! the Established Church? No. God has some of His church in the Established Church. I am not sectarian, though some people say, "Grace, I never saw such a people as yours are in my life; all your people are going to be saved, and all the rest will be lost!" It is not so; I no more believe all the congregation that come to hear me at Brighton are elect than I believe all you are. I am not judging; it is not my prerogative. I am not going to judge churchmen, dissenters, Arminians, or anyone else. With all my soul and body I would stand up and oppose the damnable heresy of Socinianism, and all who deny the divinity of the blessed Son of Son. Do away with His divinity, and you must be damned to a man. But, blessed be God, we have not so learned Christ. "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." That He might redeem it to Himself a peculiar people. And this was with "the washing of water by the word."

Now you go to that portion of the Word of God in the gospel of John, where you find that Christ, in the humiliation of His heart, takes a towel and goes and washes His disciples' feet; and when He goes to Peter, "Lord," says Peter, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." I don't wonder much at Peter's saying that. 'No, Lord, You shall never degrade Yourself by washing my feet—a poor dirty fisherman's feet.' Well, 'If I wash thee not, Peter,' says Jesus, 'thou hast no part with me.' 'Then,' says Peter, 'if that be it, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Jesus saith unto Him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash His feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all." Well, you see there were some that were clean outwardly. He washed Judas' feet, but never washed him in the fountain of

His blood. "Ye are clean," says Christ, "through the word I have spoken unto you"—the washing of regeneration—washing of water by the word.

But now we come to the blessed washing I have spoken of: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened." Who for? Why, for the characters I have been speaking of, the church of God. Then let us come to a personal experience of it. Dear Cowper says,

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.  
The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there have I, though vile as he,  
Washed all my sins away."

When I was in London two years ago, in the other part of the town, as I came out of the pulpit a dear old man came to me and said, "Sir, thirty years ago I altered that verse to 'there *would* I'; but blessed be God I don't want to alter it now. I can say

'There *have* I, though vile as he,  
Washed all my sins away.'

Why that made it look different altogether; 'there *have* I.'

Well, then, though this was done in the eternal purposes of Jehovah; though it was done when in the day of atonement the sins of all the elect were removed, here comes the application of it; for, as Mr. Hart says,

"When to me that blood's applied,  
'Tis then it does me good."

When sin is charged on the conscience, it is too heavy to be borne. I believe when a man preaches the truth he cannot be too simple in setting forth the word of God. Perhaps some of you say, "Is it some open revelation when we come to know this?" I assure you, my dear friends, I used to think so. But the Lord was not in the whirlwind nor in the fire; but in the still small voice. A blessed faith's view of Christ crucified for me. A poor sinner under the law has his eyes turned to Mount Sinai. He hears the thunderings of Mount Sinai, and the terrible tempest and sound of words, that so the children of Israel said to Moses, "Let us not hear these things; but speak thou to us." But when the set time to favour Zion is come, the poor sinner's eye is turned from Mount Sinai to Mount Calvary, and he is brought to feel the preciousness of that blood, which not only made atone-



ment for sin, but brings peace to a guilty conscience, and washes the soul from defilement, and sets him at a happy liberty. Now the poor sinner, looking at himself and despairing of salvation, is led to look to Jesus, and feeling the efficacy of that precious blood brought to him by the power of the Holy Ghost, he asks, "Where are my sins that I felt?"—it may be but yesterday. I will tell you how it was with me. The next day I was walking out, and I said, "Dear Lord, where is the burden of my guilt and sin that I felt yesterday?" And the Lord was so condescending at that time that I never asked Him a question but He answered it. He said, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

Now we have it in the past tense, "*Washed* us from our sins in His Own blood;" in the present tense, "*The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth* us from all sin." And when there is an application of that blood to the conscience, we find it to be a cleansing blood—a fountain for sinners to plunge in. And when it is brought home in the power of the Holy Ghost, we say, 'What wondrous love it is, that Jesus should have shed His precious blood to redeem us from all iniquity, and given us a personal application of it!' Furthermore, "and made us kings and priests unto God and His Father."

Now this part of my subject I don't know that I shall speak from other than in this way, for a few moments. Supposing a poor beggar in the streets, in the most abject poverty, were taken by our Sovereign, and not only washed from filth and dirt, but clothed, this would be a great thing. But think what God has done for us! Supposing our Sovereign were to adopt that child as her own—wondrous love indeed!—she could not make it a prince or princess, or give it a title to the throne. But that God should have taken us—enemies and traitors to His throne—and not only loved us, washed us, and clothed us, but raised us from the dust, and from the dunghill of our nature, and made us kings and priests, and raised us to a throne of glory. The children of God are heirs of a kingdom, and faith puts us in possession of it. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" Therefore, says the Lord, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." But, remember, we are not born kings; it is alone by virtue of our union with Christ. It is the sovereign act and pleasure of God, that He has made us kings: and not only kings to have a kingdom, but, bye and bye, as the apostle Peter says, to possess "an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the

power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Well then, not only kings, but priests also. Every one of God's dear children is a priest, because they offer sacrifices; and none but they ever offer sacrifices acceptably. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." These are the priests—not Popish priests—not man-made priests. You need not go into the Church of Rome for priests; there are plenty of others. These priests are consecrated and set apart by God with holy oil, which ran from Aaron's head down to his beard, and to the skirts of his garments. John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Again, "And the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

May God command His blessing on these few words, for His dear name's sake. Amen.

## SOVEREIGN MERCY.

A GLIMPSE AT THE LORD'S PERSONAL DEALINGS.

Barrow Hill, Staveley, Chesterfield,  
March 10th, 1868.

My dear and well-beloved Sister, in our precious and adorable Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,—

**P**EACE be with you,—that is, Jesus be with you experimentally in your heart, for "He is our Peace." Without Him, without the sensible enjoyment of Him in our hearts, all is disorder, confusion and strife. Is it not a wonder that "peace" is ours at all? Oh what envious, obstinate, corrupt, and rebellious stuff we are made of. The heart deceitful, the flesh corrupt, the thoughts evil, the desires devilish, the whole nature ENMITY against God. O wonder of wonders, LOVE appears! Jesus is love. Jesus, in Whom all the glorious perfections of the Godhead shine with resplendent brightness, comes, and in our poor heaving bosoms takes up His abode. He warms our hearts, and gently leads us into the knowledge of the covenant and counsels of peace. He is our Daysman, our Umpire, just the One Who can argue out the points of difference between our souls and the arch-enemy. In Him, beneath the shelter of His atoning blood; (for He *has made peace* by the blood of His cross;) in Him, clothed in that glorious robe of righteousness, which is peace, and the effect of which are

"quietness and assurance for ever;" aye, in Him we safely abide; in Him we enjoy sweet fellowship. Partners with Jesus Christ, having a joint interest in all the concerns of grace which the Father committed to His trust before all worlds, we join in each other's joys and sorrows, and love to hail each other, as fellow-pilgrims by the way with kindly greetings, which plainly tell that we are only lodgers here, and that we are bound for the same home, to enjoy the sweets of that land where Jesus is all in all. What rich, astonishing grace to think, even for a moment, that the Father, by His good Spirit, gives a precious Jesus, Who is the delight of His heart, to cheer and comfort us down here in this cold land of disquietude and discontent! When Jesus, by the communications of the ever blessed Spirit comes, the storms of earth all vanish, fleshy turmoils cease, the horrible din of war with sin, Satan and the flesh ceases, and the peace of God (JESUS) rules in our hearts. Does it not ravish the soul, and set it on fire of love, to know that in the face of all our innumerable sins and iniquities we are ONE WITH HIM?

"As He is, so are we in this world." Where He is, so are we; what He has, so have we; when He fails, so do we. Bless His dear and holy name, He can never fail. In Him we are, so we are always safe. We bless His name, for that *fear* which He hath planted in our breasts,—even *that* is Himself *He is our fear*. How sweetly this came to dear old Jacob's mind. Gen. xxxi. 42 and 53.

I feel much obliged for the letter you sent me of that dear old woman, Mary Levitt. I wish you would send me her address. Thanks for the little dots in your pilgrimage. The first manifestation of *life* in me was when I was but a child. Under the ministry of a clergyman of the Church of England, Patrick Joseph O'Leary, Incumbent of St. Jude's Church, Canal Street, Ancoats, Manchester, I first trembled at the word. Oftentimes I would have gladly exchanged places with the beasts which perish, because I thought, "*There is no hell for them!*" and I could see and feel that damnation was my deserved portion. The dear old clergyman took a special interest in me, but, though I loved him, I loved the world and sin and death better. I passed on in this state, until by the mysterious hand of Jehovah, Who never makes mistakes, I was placed on the staff of the Manchester City Mission. A more detestable hypocrite never assumed such a position. I had not been in this place long before God took effective measures to open up to me the awful situation I occupied as a mere fleshly professor. Jesus, in His finished work, was set before my eyes, which gave me to see that I, in myself,

was a finished sinner. But what beauty did I see in the glorious truth, "Complete in Him!" I sought the company of my dear old friend, the sainted Parks, of Opershaw, who is now chanting before the throne. We were one in the Lord until he was taken home. Why should I say "until he was taken home?" We are one still. Even now I enjoy sweet communion with him in our glorious Head. God knows, heaven is all the sweeter and dearer to me because dear O'Leary and Parks are there. In 1859, the Lord sent me to labour among the colliers at Haydock, where the Turtons live. The Lord blessed the word with signs which have followed. The last day of November, 1866, the Lord in His good purpose, and in the chariot of His providence, carried me over here, where He is evidently blessing His Own truth to the souls of many of the scattered flock. I am placed here as Scripture Reader, but not under any clergyman. Church service I conduct in the church on the hill, morning and evening each Sunday, and superintend the Sunday School. I hold one cottage meeting in the week, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m. The Staveley Coal and Iron Company support me here.

I shall, D.V., be in Chesterfield shortly, and will make enquiries for you concerning Mrs. V——. Hoping to hear often from you, and expecting to meet you "at home," at "*our Father's board*;" aye, and

"Upon the throne  
We'll sit with Christ the Lord;  
Eternal joy shall be our own:  
So speaks the faithful word.  
In Heavenly glory we shall shine,—  
O grace, distinguishing, divine!"

Yours in a precious Christ,

THOMAS BRADBURY.

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### HABAKKUK'S SONG. PART 1.

"REST IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE."

Habakkuk iii. 16-19.

"*Thou art my lamp, O Lord.*"—2 Sam. xxii. 29.

Is your brook, O believer, like Cherith, run dry?  
Do your fig trees, all withered, yield no more supply?  
Is your song hushed to silence? No, faith being strong,  
It still may be yours to sing Habakkuk's song.

Though the fruit of the labour of years be lost,—all!  
No wheat in the garner, no herd in the stall;  
Remember, that promise to you doth belong,  
"I'll never forsake." Then sing Habakkuk's song.

Say not, "God forgets me,"—it cannot be so ;  
 The "hairs of your head are all numbered," you know.  
 You are "graved on His palms." Should not faith then be  
 strong,

And, sweetly submissive ? Sing Habakkuk's song.

Like Joseph and Daniel and Paul, thus may you  
 The truth of your Lord's all-sufficiency show ;  
 And He will be glorified, O then be strong,  
 And in all tribulation, sing Habakkuk's song !

If you have been true in your service to Him,  
 'Tis not in earth's sorrows your soul's joy to dim ;  
 Rejoice in the trial of faith that grows strong,  
 As it, in the furnace, learns Habakkuk's song.

If you to yourself have this sorrow procured,  
 Then surely with meekness it should be endured :  
 Yet *doubt not His love* : pray in faith to be strong,  
 With penitent tears singing Habakkuk's song.


For O, is not love a sweet balm to the scul ?  
 He chastens to bless us ; He wounds to make whole ;  
 He loves while refining—should faith not be strong,  
 And, trusting love's purpose, sing Habakkuk's song ?

Yes ; let earthly good fail us, or earthly streams dry,  
 We still can rejoice in our treasure on high ;  
 O dear fellow pilgrims ! while marching along,  
 Let us glorify God and sing Habakkuk's song.

*Communicated.*

### A JUST MAN PERISHING.

*"There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness."—  
 Ecclesiastes vii. 15.*

AVING had a personal and intimate relative who has lately passed away, and in whom the above passage of holy writ had a literal fulfilment, I purpose, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to offer a few remarks thereon. The cry of "A man overboard !" does not fail to cause consternation and alarm ; but it is as true now as when the divine seer wrote : "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart ; . . . none considering the righteous is taken away from the evil to come" (Is. lvii. 1). That the just man may perish in his own righteousness is evident (Eze. xviii. 24), both from the text quoted and also from the case under consideration. But it will be asked, In what sense can a just man perish ?

Does not David say, "I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken"? (Psalm xxxvii. 25). I answer, Who ever did see the righteous forsaken of his God? Paul says, "Persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed; perplexed but not in despair" (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9). To the justified man the promise reads: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews xiii. 5). How then does a just man perish in his righteousness? Why, in the same way that Lazarus of old perished (Luke xvi. 20—2). The same as in the case I have referred to. But, perchance, the God Whose eyes run to and fro the earth, and seeth not as man seeth, sent His invisible messengers—as in the case of Lazarus, so with every one of His elect—"to gather them to Abraham's bosom." What becomes of all the solemn mockeries of the rich man's funeral, so prevalent in our day?

I think this comforting to the poor tried children of God to know in these perilous and trying times—with many of whom, doubtless, it is a desperate struggle to pay their way, to keep their heads above water, and with very many to obtain the bread that perishes—that while a just man may and does perish in his outward estate, that God is faithful to His new covenant promises, which pertain to eternal life.

But having looked at the text, to see what it means, in reference to a just man perishing in his (own) righteousness, let us consider for a moment what it does not say. It saith not, There is a just man that perishes in Christ's imputed righteousness. No! blessed be God, our Heavenly Father; there is no such thing as that. You may search the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation;—

"If this foundation be destroyed,  
What can the righteous do?"

Do? Why there would be nothing to do but sit down and encourage all the blackest thoughts of despair! But as Christ finished the work His Father gave Him to do (John xvi. 4), on behalf of poor, lost, ruined, and guilty sinners, it is, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth may enter in."

It was the favourite theme with the dear departed, who forms the subject of this letter, to dwell upon the merits of Christ—His blood to atone, His righteousness to adorn, and that there must be a continual striving for these blessings, saying, "No fighting, no victory; no victory, no crown." His name was John Brooks, born June 3rd, 1798; died August 12th, 1882, aged 84. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

Brighton, Sept., 1882.

GEORGE BROOKS.

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## THE WILL THE SOUL'S INDEX.

**T**HE needle of the compass does not more faithfully indicate the North ; the pole-star itself does not more incontrovertibly define its position ; nor does the sun more clearly determine the course of time and the seasons, than "the WILL of man" evinces his spiritual estate. Whether "dead in trespasses and sins," or "passed from death unto life," the WILL remains the evidential INDEX. It shows where and what a man is, and whither he is going. If held fast in Satan's bands, or delivered by the Almighty Saviour's command, "Loose him, and let him go," the proof of either is to be found in the state of the WILL.

The opposition of its natural inclination to God, both in the law and in the gospel of His Son, is demonstrated in countless and ever-varying ways. The law is too austere in its holy claims, to be received in its entirety as the mind of God, and the gospel is too abasing to human power and pride, to be esteemed as worthy of acceptance. But in a form, modified by the ideas of the creature, the law is more acceptable than the Gospel ; for by it there is at least something required of man in the way of *doing*. But the gospel, which repudiates all such doing, and declares that "it is not of him that willeth (according to the flesh), nor of him that runneth (according to the precepts of the law), but of God (in and through Christ) that sheweth mercy," this is intolerable to the carnal mind, which is "enmity against God." And, animated by this "enmity," the WILL of the unrenewed man will negative all God's affirmations relative to the way of salvation, and choose its own path.

"We will not have this man to reign over us," is its cry in answer to the words, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." Psalm ii. 12. To submit to the righteousness of Christ, without any of its own, and to the sovereignty of free and discriminating grace, is intolerable to pharisaic pride. The Saviour marked this in His professing opposers. He read their thoughts. He knew they had no place for Him in their affections. And yet they would and did "search the scriptures of the Old Testament," thinking in them they had "eternal life ;" and these very writings were they which testified of the Lord Jesus as the Messiah. But they did not desire to perceive this, and were filled with deadly hostility to Him. Aware of all this He in the most emphatic way declared (for there is no *rejected invitation* implied in the words) : "Ye do not WILL to come to Me (for so the Greek reads) that ye might have life." John v. 39, 40. No : they WILLED to "have life" in their own way ; "they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law : for they stumbled at that stumbling stone"—Christ. Rom. ix. 32.

To argue for the *freedom* of man's will from the text just quoted, when it so plainly shows the will of those to whom the Saviour thus spoke to have been in the greatest bondage to Satan, law, and sin, is indeed an anomaly. To substantiate a positive from a negative outdoes the usual Latin style of asserting a positive by two negatives. To assert that carnal men *may* come to Christ *if they will* or *please*, when they have neither *will* nor *pleasure* to do so, is like all the other Babel-talk and vain theories associated with Arminianism. For if there be any spiritual liking, pleasure, and desire to come to Christ, "the Fountain of life," for pardon, justification, peace, and all needful grace, and to take up His cross daily, and deny self, sin, and the world, it evidences the possession of a new nature, from *which* proceeds a heavenly *will*, and which is "after God, created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. 24. The new birth must precede the new will: and hence of all the spiritually-begotten sons of God it is affirmed: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the WILL of the flesh, nor of the WILL of man, but of God," John i. 13. And again: OF HIS OWN WILL begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures," James i. 18: and yet again: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever," 1 Pet. i. 23. All that these various declarations comprise, is contained in the words of the Lord Jesus to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3. But let us further trace the WILL as an INDEX of the unregenerate state.

This is marked out with unerring precision in certain portions of the Word of God, whereby it is shown that just as the natural man, —high-flying and zealous professor though he be—has no inclination to come to the Christ of God and the fulness of His merits for "life"—so in every such instance there is fully manifested in various ways the WILL for the world, its children, lusts, and pleasures. We shall notice at present but two: distinguishing therein, at the same time, between the worldly-minded saint and the dead professor.

1. James iv. 4: "Whosoever therefore WILL be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." If this implied that a *temporary bias* of the mind towards the world and its vanities proved a man to be the "enemy of God," what child of His could escape the charge? But it is not so. The WILL here acts as the INDEX, and shows in the *constant bent* of the affections and pursuits, where the treasure and the heart are. For the sake of worldly society, with its joys and pastimes, religion is ignored and slighted as a bore; a wearying tiresome thing. Christ, in the written and preached word, and His



people's company and place of assembly are despised and forsaken, until the very name of religion is a stench in the nostrils—a thing for the morbidly melancholy, women, and fools. Gay society, and worldly honours and amusements, are the powerful attractions, and everything popular and gratifying to the flesh is sided with. Whosoever WILL (*i.e.*, is determined to) be thus “a friend of the world,” must be the “enemy of God.” For the restrictions of His Word and the teachings of His faithful ministers are set at defiance, and cast behind the back, and only they who will “prophesy smooth things” and not disturb the guilty conscience can be tolerated by these earth-bound ones. And of such it is further written: “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” 1 John ii. 16, 17.

By the force of the sweeping current of time-affairs, in business, and by the tempting baits set before the eye and appealing to the ear, the Lord's children often find their little bark floating down towards the rapids of worldly absorption. But the implanted fear of the Lord, by which they are kept from departing from Him, (Jer. xxxii. 40), raises the cry within their souls, ere they are utterly carried away, “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken Thou me in Thy way.” Psal. cxix. 37. They, therefore, are “not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” Heb. x. 39. Nor can their love to the people and house of God be extinguished, however it be damped at intervals. The language of David in this respect finds its echo in every member of the Lord's family: “Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth. Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men.” Psalm xxvi. 8, 9. In eternity, as in time, he desired the home and society of the beloved of the Lord, as essential to his own happiness and peace.

2. 1. Tim. vi. 9: “But they that WILL be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” Here the WILL with respect to wealth expresses the fixed determination to pursue and obtain it, let the difficulties and perils that lie in the path be great as they may. For to be born rich, or to rise from poverty to affluence, has been given to some of the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Even as of the father of the faithful it is said, “And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold,” Gen. xiii. 2. So also became the other patriarchs. Though, let it not be overlooked, Abram failed not to give Melchizedek “tithes of all,”

Chap. xiv. 20. He honoured the Lord with his substance, and with the firstfruits of all his increase. It is the restless, grasping, grudging spirit of insatiable avarice which is pointed at, and condemned. "They that WILL be rich," whose sole or chief aim is gold, great is their danger. What horrid and multitudinous crimes have been committed by its worshippers! What servile drudgery, painful privations, and unjust withholding from the family, needy kinsfolk, and poor in general, have marked the miserly soul in its infatuation. On this the curse of God has ever rested. Achan's wedge of gold, was the death of him in Achor's valley. Gehazi's talents of silver, obtained from Naaman, led to his incurable leprosy. And the Saviour's solemn sentence is, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. vi. 24.

It is to be lamented that among those of the well-to-do of the Lord's people, with rare exceptions, the WILL to be rich too often largely predominates, and leaves them far from realizing the sweetness of the truth, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts xx. 23. From a deplorable lack of apprehension of the fact that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver," and that with Him the rule is that, "if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted *according to that a man hath*," some who have an abundance of "this world's goods" are regulated in giving towards the support of the Gospel ministry, or to the necessities of the poor, by the worldly policy of reckoning the *number* of supposed contributors (in which the larger part may be but in ordinary or even poor circumstances). And thus they give a comparative trifle, which may be in accordance with the *number*, but certainly is not in proportion to *their own position*, as compared with that of those among whom they count themselves. It is often thus the Lord's servants and excellent societies suffer more loss by the presence of ungenerous wealthy men than by their absence. For their conduct affords a pretext for no exertion on the part of any. For why should a man with a family, whose income does not realize more than £50, £100, or £150 *per annum*, be expected by those whose incomes are ten, twenty, or thirty times greater than his, to give (as many do) half as much, and which in the Lord's sight is twenty or fifty times more than they? Respecting the poor widow's two mites, in contrast to the gifts of the rich to the Lord's treasury, the Saviour declared: "Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all." Luke xxi. 3. Therefore, says the Apostle to Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in

store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 17-19. For well has Hart written :

"If profit be thy scope,  
Diffuse thy alms about :  
The worldling prospers laying up,  
The christian laying out.  
Returns will not be scant,  
With honour in the high'st ;  
For who relieves his brethren's want  
Bestows his alms on Christ."

The Lord grant the power of His Holy Spirit and the shedding abroad of His melting and constraining love in the hearts of all His wealthy children, that they may awake, shake themselves from the dust, and arise to a sense of the happiness flowing from Gospel liberality : for "the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." Isaiah xxxii. 8. And surely it will be a cheering recompense to them to know that they have the blessings of the Lord's poor, and are remembered in the prayers of His servants. And thus they will escape the perils of those who "will be rich."

We have felt compelled to write thus, and perhaps for some wise purpose, having read of and witnessed something of the great abounding of the evil in the professing church. The Lord grant our words may not be in vain. We now in conclusion notice the WILL as the INDEX of regeneration.

"Thy people shall be WILLING in the day of Thy power," says the Father to the Son, Psalm cx. 3. And so it comes to pass when the Spirit of Christ takes up His dwelling in their hearts. Then is their WILL "turned as clay" to His "SEAL." No longer can they urge their course in wild, careless, daring opposition to the Word of the Lord. No longer can Satan, sin and world command their ready obedience to their calls and offers. A sense of sin, wrought by the Holy Spirit, embitters the pleasures of this world, and brings the awful realities of the world to come home to the heart and mind. And great is the restlessness and misery while they are kept wholly in the dark as to the Lord's purpose towards them.

But at length the Fountain of living waters arises before them in the Gospel, and their souls, parched and "ready to perish," are led to them. Now their WILL becomes an INDEX of their state ; for the invitation runs : "Whosoever WILL, let him take the water of life freely." Will they, like the carnal or Pharisees, pay no heed ? No : they need the water ; they can only obtain it freely, as they have no money to pay. They have a WILL for it. They by sorely-experienced thirst and pollution have been prepared by the Lord

Himself for its streams, that they may drink and be purified. How blessed, then, this word, "WHOSOEVER WILL!" It is a portion of the heritage of those who fear the Lord's name. It is the word of grace to all who have ears to hear and a heart to receive it. The fulness and freeness of sovereign grace, in the perfected atonement of Christ, are manifested in gentle beauty before their eyes, and as those made WILLING they shall, in God's time, drink, and live for ever. A spiritually-inclined mind, and a Christ-directed WILL, are an INDEX safe and sure of having been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. THE EDITOR.

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### THE NAMES AND CHARACTERS OF OUR LORD.

"*I am Alpha.*"—Rev. i. 8.


What names, what love-titles our Saviour bears !  
 What honors the blessed Pre-eminent wears !  
 Lo ! He is our *Advocate*, ever prevailing ;  
 The *Author* of faith that is fixed and unfailing ;  
*Altar* of sacrifice, incense, and praise ;  
*Alpha* of Wisdom's inscrutable ways ;  
*Adam* the second, in Whom we have life ;  
*Armour* to cover our head in the strife ;  
*Apple-tree*, fairer than trees of the wood,  
 Yielding us fragrance, and shelter, and food ;  
 The covenant *Angel* Who goeth before ;  
 The *Almighty*, Whose word is our hope, and our power ;  
 The *Ark* of our safety, our *All-in-All* gain ;  
 Our *Apostle* of truth, and confirming *Amen*.

C. H. M.

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### THE DRYING UP OF THE WATER OF THE GREAT RIVER EUPHRATES.

Dear Mr. Editor,

 F you think the following lines will throw a little light on the present page of the world's history and be interesting to your readers, I place them at your discretion to use as you think proper.

Prophecy is a part of theology, the diligent and persistent study of which is calculated, with the guidance and attendant blessing of the Holy Spirit, to convince the student of the eternal and unerring prescience of God extending to all events that transpire in this world. With God there is no one event contingent, all is fore-known : hence, He declares, "My counsel shall stand, and I will

do all My pleasure." While, in a manner, some of the most momentous events in history have seemed to depend on the will and judgment of one man, even to the apparent possibility of falsifying some of the most remarkable predictions on record, yet God foreknew for certain how the man's will and judgment would decide. Take the case of Zedekiah, King of Judah, as an illustration, See Jer. xxxviii. 14-23. The prophet says to the king, "If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live and thine house: but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord, which I speak unto thee." One is almost ready to ask, What would have been the consequence, had Zedekiah obeyed the prophet's most earnest exhortation? Jeremiah exhorted the king to obedience with as much earnestness as though he had never uttered a prediction respecting the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. But not only did God know how the king would decide, but also the exact manner he would attempt to escape. See Ezek. xii. 1-13, especially the 12th and 13th verses, and compare with Jer. xxxix. 4-5. And bear in mind that Ezekiel was with the captives in Babylon at the time. Well might the apostle Peter say, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; WHEREUNTO YE DO WELL THAT YE TAKE HEED, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place," 2 Pet. i. 19. Seeing the fulfilment of every prediction God has caused to be recorded in His holy word is absolutely certain, and no scheming or cunning of man can prevent it, our business then is to seek to understand the sure word of prophecy. May the Lord fulfil His promise, and grant us the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into all truth.

There are three scriptures especially, according to my judgment, that will help us to understand recent events in Egypt. The first is, the contents of the sixth trumpet, Rev. ix. 13-21. The loosing of the four angels which were bound in the great river Euphrates, have long been understood to apply to the invasion of the Turks into Europe; and it is a historical fact that they come from beyond the Euphrates, and were led by four sultanies. The other details enumerated by the angel of the sixth trumpet, have all been interpreted to agree with the manner of the invasion; and the next scripture will, I think, describe the extent of the overflow of the water of the great river Euphrates. You will find the words in Dan. xi., beginning at the second clause of the 40th verse. I may just premise that the 36th to 39th verses describe the rise and

character of the papal hierarchy. The first clause of the 40th verse ; "the king of the south shall push at him ;" I believe, applies to the Saracenic war, and which is further described by the angel of the fifth trumpet, Rev. ix. 1-12. Then we come to the second clause, which reads thus : "And the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships ; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall OVERFLOW AND PASS OVER. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt ; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps." Now this scripture gives a very fair description of the invasion of the Turks, and the extent of the Turkish Empire, as it has existed for more than four centuries since the capture of Constantinople. The prophecy seems, therefore, so clearly to apply to Turkey, I cannot see how anyone who seriously considers the text can dispute it. And I think the third scripture will still further confirm the correctness of this application. The third scripture reads thus : "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river, Euphrates ; and the water thereof was dried up." Rev. xvi. 12. There is no need whatever to stumble to understand what is meant by "the water drying up." The angel's interpretation of "the waters, where the whore sitteth," in the xvii. chap. and 15th verse is, "*peoples ; and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*" The drying up of the water of the great river Euphrates, will, therefore, mean the decay of the Turkish power. The drying-up process has, I believe, been going on for at least thirty years ; and events have followed one another so rapidly of late, that all who study these things, must be aware that the Turkish Empire in Europe has been considerably curtailed. And note this, the drying up of water off land, does not necessarily mean that the land will be impoverished, but rather enriched thereby. So all the states in Europe that have been redeemed from under the Turkish yoke, are socially and commercially richer. And now, to all appearance, Turkey is likely to lose all power and sovereignty in Egypt. Of course, I cannot say positively, that the diplomatists will so decide ; but it seems very probable. At all events, let us hope that the war will open a door for the social and commercial, and, if it please God, the spiritual, regeneration of Egypt. Dear Mr. Editor, you will perceive how easily I could have enlarged on this subject. I hope I have not marred its usefulness for brevity's sake ; as I felt obliged to consider your space.

I am, dear Sir,

Leicester, Sept. 23, 1882.

Yours sincerely,

J. W.

## THEOLOGY IN AMERICA.

*(Concluded from page 288.)*

I see your "future felicity" depends entirely upon your own workmanship,—“If we spend our lives in the love and service of Him, the God over all, Who has made us as we are.” What nook or snug corner did you get in, Jonathan, to escape the fall? and if so, you were the only one; but I know you did not, because the Bible says, “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. v. 12). But as your vocabulary is silent concerning such things as these you are not likely to say anything. When you said speaking of “us as we are” did you mean before we fell in Adam, or after. In reading your words upon this subject, you say, “if we disregard and disobey Him we secure for ourselves a heritage of misery.” When “the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” Genesis ii. 15, 16, 17, did not Adam “disregard and disobey Him” by partaking of the forbidden fruit, and secure both for himself and all his posterity, “a heritage of misery?” How will you, nay, how can you, retrieve this loss? You propose, but your propositions are wider of the mark than the two Antipodes. It is a positive declaration of the Bible that all have sinned, and that all are dead in trespasses and sins: as dead as regard spiritual life, as a man is literally or naturally when mortal life is extinct. And yet you put all these dead men in a state of probation, to work for life, and to live and serve God with. And to accomplish this, you set before them the resurrection of the dead, the last assize or day of judgment, the opening of the books, when the dead shall be judged, the tribunal, the appointed inquest, according to their works. If you had known what it is to have a part in the “first resurrection,” for Christ says, “I am the resurrection and the life,” and what it is “to be raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness, and born again to a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” we should have heard a different tone from you.

You forget, Jonathan, (if you ever knew) that God’s people are judged here, and that the God of the quick and the dead sets up a tribunal in every sinner’s conscience, and tries him in this court, as in a case of life and death, heaven and hell. And in these balances of the sanctuary he is either condemned or acquitted. Though the poor sinner from head to foot is clothed with guilt and shame, and

can only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," yet cry he will, until he hears the reply: "Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom," Job xxxiii. 24. The words—surety and substitution—are as foreign to you as salvation by grace. This is strange in your ears is it not? There will be a judgment, and you tell us the books will be opened, but you don't tell us what those books are. I know what those books were unto me, when God the Holy Ghost first convinced me of my sinnership. The first book that was opened before my eyes was opened by Moses, to show me the contents of a broken law, and a catalogue of sins and transgressions more in number than the hairs of my head, the sight of which crushed me and rent my heart asunder, and which caused me to cry: "Lost! lost! damned for ever!" and, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The second book was the book of conscience, which acted like nitre upon green wounds. Here I was smitten with convictions innumerable, full of accusations. I felt left without excuse, with my mouth in the dust, crying, "If so be there may be hope." Helpless and undone I lay until a gleam of hope was given, and then a third book was opened, called the book of life, containing my worthless name. This broke me down in sweet contrition and humility before the Lord. This book of life was full of Christ; the leaves of which, together with the Bible, I felt were "for the healing of the nations." Then I could say with David, "He brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. And He put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Psalm xl. 2, 3. A fourth book was opened called the book of Providence. This caused me to wonder no little. I was a wonder to many, but the greatest wonder to myself. And how it was the Lord should have manifested Himself to me and not to the world I could not tell, as I felt myself the chief of all sinners. And then to trace the Lord's hand in my preservation. Ten thousand providences and deliverances could now be seen, and God's caring for me, and watching over me were a fulfilment of that sweet portion: "Preserved in Jesus Christ and called," Jude 1.

A fifth book was opened, called the book of creation. I never saw the beauties of creation disclosed in such grandeur, as they appeared when opened before my spiritual vision. The world around me seemed as though it had put on its holiday dress and held carnival on this occasion. Hills and vales, skies and woodlands, winds and waters, all seemed in harmony together. While I, a poor, grace-saved sinner, was blessing and praising the Lord for His salvation to me, as His Own sovereign gift. And I feel highly



favoured when the Lord in rich mercy condescends to open these books and shine in them even now. To me it is a token of salvation, but to some would be a token of perdition, Dan. vii. 10; Rev. xx. 12. Woe unto you, Jonathan, or any other person, if these books are not opened before you in time: "For there is no work, nor desire, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccles. ix. 10.

*Jonathan.*—I perceive you and I differ a little in our opinions, Joseph. But don't you think after all that we act the wiser part in setting all these terrific things before the people? We do it with a good motive, hoping the people will be alarmed at these things, that they may leave off their sins and wicked pursuits and become virtuous, and set a pattern of moral goodness, worthy of being copied: it is not to be told the amount of good such colossal monuments of piety are capable of doing in the world. I shall now give you one mode of procedure. The tribunal before which we shall undergo our appointed inquest is one of the strictest impartiality, is the one bar in all the universe where unalloyed justice will be dispensed. In the world several circumstances interfere with the dispensation of a proper award to the members of civil society. Human vision is bounded, crime may be perpetrated beyond the precincts of observation, testimony may be wanting to the commission of the crime, and thus the perpetrator may escape both detection and punishment. The position of the criminal sometimes proves his protection. His social prominence shuts the eyes of the officers; prevents investigation, puts a spell on the jury, or calls forth executive interposition. The insignificance of the criminal is sometimes his exemption. His very littleness in the estimation of those around him, under some circumstances, and in some localities, shield the violator of the law. Indeed, obscurity shields the transgressor.

But these circumstances do not extend their shadow to that august place where the Lord of all sits in judgment on the creatures of His hand. There is nothing to be hoped for as respects the ignorance of the Judge. He knows all things. His eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth, and are in every place beholding the evil and the good, He sees the play of every thought, the movement of every affection, the curve of every arm, and the path of every step.

• *Joseph.*—I feel rather delicate in expressing my suspicions, or I really should say that my friend Jonathan has either been a judge or a coroner, if not both. Well, and granting these surmises to be correct, does it not augur well for a man in those circumstances or occupations to use a fitting amount of gravity, and especially if he

takes upon himself the office of a bishop. It is true he must quit his other callings, but is not barred from retaining any relic of his calling. Should it prove in any way advantageous, such as passing opinions and giving advice: 'strict impartiality,' 'appointed inquests,' 'unalloyed justice,' 'the bounding of human vision,' 'perpetration of crime beyond the precincts of observation,' 'a want of testimony to the commission of crime,' 'the possibility of the perpetrator escaping detection and punishment,' 'position of a criminal sometimes prove his protection.' 'His social prominence in society may tend to blind the eyes of the greatest officers of the law,' 'prevent scrutiny,' 'bribe the jury,' 'the insignificance of the criminal sometimes is his exemption,' 'the criminal's littleness in public estimation may shield the violater in some localities,' 'obscurity, or eminence, may shield the transgressor.' "But these circumstances do not extend their shadow to that august place where the Lord of all sits in judgment on the creatures of His hand."

Should all you have stated in your depositions be strictly true, which we see no reason to doubt, "It will neither add nor diminish to the condemnation of them which are condemned already." John iii. 18. If God can change (which is impossible) I see no reason that you should not change as often as you like, and work out "an appropriate character" to fit you for that station, or any other station you choose. You are, according to your own theology, quite competent to mark out your own way to heaven, although you say "I go, Sir," but never take a step--as all religious somnambulists do. What a marked difference there is between the Apostle Paul and you. Where he speaks of the potter having power over the clay,—the literal figure you believe in,—but what does this imply? Just what the infallible word says it does: "What if God, willing to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory?" Rom. ix. 22, 23. You, who boast so much of marking out your own way, have just as much power in moulding your own clay; and for anyone to point you to the Holy Ghost, Whose power and prerogative alone it is to raise the dead sinner from his grave of corruption and free-will presumption, save them by His grace, and give them life, love, peace and joy, by saying, "Loose him, and let him go," would "do violence to such natures" as yours. In having occasionally a little conversation with your theologians, there is little or no difference, as you have all been to one college, and are tarred with one brush, and with very few

exceptions, I fear (though if I err in this, I would err on the side of charity), taught by the same spirit, 1 Kings xxii. 21, 22 ; which is anything but favourable to God's people, as old Micaiah shall be called in for to witness.

Then you go on to say, which in my humble opinion is setting down all you have advanced on a small scale as regards its intrinsic work : " But these circumstances do not extend their shadow to that august place, where the Lord of all sits in judgment on the creatures of His hand." I am quite of the same opinion, Jonathan ; for when you read God's word upon this subject, it has quite another sound and another meaning with it. It is either " Come ye blessed," or, " Depart ye cursed." " As the tree falls so it lies," and as it leans it generally falls ; and where death leaves them judgment finds them. " He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy let him be filthy still : and he that is righteous let him be righteous still : and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. xxii. 11. This is the substance of truth ; not the shadow which you and I, Jonathan, would do well to ponder. One line of this sterling truth yields a thousand times more satisfaction than broad acres of empty harangue. " There is nothing to be hoped from the ignorance of the Judge. He knows all things. His eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth, and are in every place beholding the evil and the good. He sees the play of every thought, the movement of every affection, the curve of every arm, and the path of every step." Infinite wisdom foresaw the ignorance of His people, and caused a sacrifice to be offered for it, Num. xv. 24, 25, at which time in their unregenerated state God winked at it, Acts xvii. 30.

*The late J. FLETCHER.*

## Letters by the Household of Faith.

LETTER BY RUTH BRYAN.

*"In returning and rest ye shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength."*

*"And she said, It is well."*

My dear Girl,



HAVE read your note with all the sympathy of a fond heart, and must write half a line, because yours is smarting ; that is, unless a leaf from the dear Tree of Life has come to heal it. I hope it may be so ; but if not, it will come, and again you shall praise Him, and sing heartily, " He hath done all things

well." Methinks He is saying, "Return unto Me;" and, "Fear not, I have redeemed thee; thou art Mine." "Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man that shall be made as grass? The grass withereth and the flower fadeth, —(creatures and creature-loves are full of change)—but "the word of our God endureth for ever." The Word that was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Here you may recline and repose without fear of rebuff. Here you cannot be too ardent, or expect too much. Return! He has bled for you—died for you; His dear heart has been laid open by the sword of justice, and only love was found in it—pure love to the very bottom. He does deserve all our heart! and He knows we would give it; but He knows, too, that flesh has not lost its sensibilities, and that we are not all spirit. And, moreover, the guilt of our very wanderings after other lovers was laid upon Him. Yes, all the sin of our unfaithfulness did He bear in His own precious body on the tree. Oh, what a friend is Christ to thee and me! Return unto Him as thy Beloved. "Return to the Almighty," and "thou shalt be built up." As for the matter in hand, He knows thy aching heart; so tell Him all about it. He formed the sensibilities of our nature, which bring some of us many pangs. He will succour; He will deliver; He will provide. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Keep telling Him all you feel and fear; that is the best way to lose the burden, and will keep from any shyness creeping in because of the feelings towards a creature. Hide nothing from Him, and communion will grow sweeter, while with shame for your weakness you hide your blushing face on His dear bosom, and feel His Own precious blood take all the guilt away.

Dearest, I wish you may be able to give all up into His dear hands. It is better to trust in Him than to put confidence in princes. Seek to live in His will, for all that will is love; and may you be helped to look away from the creature, and say with David, "I will freely sacrifice unto the Lord." It will not be without pain to the flesh; but to resign what is valued makes the sacrifice more worth having. May the love of Christ constrain and enable you. "My grace is sufficient for thee." "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." I do so enjoy those words,—

"That human heart He still retains,  
Though throned in highest bliss."

And so we have His tenderest sympathies; He knows all,—all about us at this very moment. Fear not; it shall be well! "He will guide thee with His counsel, and afterward receive thee to glory."

I was going to send a verse or two out of Isaiah liv., but there is so much in it, so precious, you must read it all. I need not say I feel for you. May our precious Jesus come in and solace your soul with His love, which is "better than wine." Lean not on earth; it will pierce thee to the quick; 'tis

"But at best a reed; oftentimes a spear."

Come up from the wilderness of self and creatures, leaning on the Beloved, in whom I am,

Yours affectionately,

RUTH.

### LETTER BY A TRIED PILGRIM.

32, Adelphi Terrace, May 4th, 1857.

My dear Christian Brother,



MAY the Lord grant me the grace I need to write you a few words of christian affection, which I have so frequently essayed to do lately but without effect. I think I may however assert my feeling the strongest attachment and regard toward you notwithstanding; and although my own characteristics as regards spiritual things are peculiarly unhappy to myself, and perhaps almost wearisome to you, I feel constrained to say something by letter.

I cannot say much upon my own experience of the reality, preciousness and vital effects of the Gospel of Christ of late. A vain testimony of a vision out of my own heart I abhor. I hate trading with a stock of dry notions, as Huntington describes. And therefore while the wilderness is not turned into a fruitful field, I cannot give any account of the "heavens dropping from above; the skies pouring down righteousness, and righteousness and salvation springing up together," through the fiat of the Covenant Jehovah. But this I can say, that there are times with me when, like the captive exile, I hasten to "be loosed, that I may not die in the pit;"—when the realities of the future press my spirit hard, and make me cry and ask and knock and struggle to get a hearing, though beset with sore evils, and a mighty obstacle for ever driving me back,—dead formalism, Divine rejection and ultimate shame and everlasting contempt. But I am brought more and more to this one point, that the work of the Holy One of Israel cannot be hastened, and that it is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." And though I hate the notion of a do-nothing religion, yet I cannot find any way of living action in myself; but can only hope to work out my own salvation by the inworking of the sovereign God of all grace. For this display

of eternal mercy I am daily asking, not desiring to look at self, but that I may partake of the life which is in Christ Jesus; that I may not be among the false ones who have His name, and that's all. And being so much tossed about with doubts and apprehensions of my own state and standing, I am the more drawn towards you, as one so highly distinguished in the grace of the Spirit, and so capable of casting up the highway, you having attained to much of that everlasting consolation and good hope through grace that I have to lament my destitution of. I can rejoice in what the Lord has done for you; for His wonderful counsels and excellent working have been manifest indeed; and it is the desire of my soul that the riches of His grace may flow abundantly through your instrumentality to many, and to myself also, according to His blessed will. I am often asking, "When shall I come and appear before God?" "When will He cause me to approach unto Him, to dwell in His courts?" Is He my God? Is He reconciled to me in and through Jesus, and shall I be brought to Zion at length? For I seem all wrong, and can't feel anything like life or faith or conversion. The state of several around me often baffles all my understanding. They seem enigmas of religion, and I often seem like them. This confusion of things makes me long to hear the "voice of the turtle;" the voice of Him Whom my soul desires to love, that He would send out His light and truth, and teach me and lead me as my Almighty Shepherd in the way everlasting. The words of Daniel Herbert are often in my mind. They are remarkably descriptive of my feelings and encouraging at times—

What is this point you long to know?

Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this,

"I want to know I'm born of God,  
An heir of everlasting bliss.

"I want to know Christ died for me,  
I want to feel the seal within,  
I want to feel His precious blood  
Was shed to wash away my sin.

"I want to feel more love to God,  
I want to feel more life in prayer;  
But when I look within my heart  
It almost drives me to despair.

"I want a mind more firmly fixed

On Christ, the everlasting Head,

I want to feel my soul alive  
And not so barren and so dead.

"I want more faith—a stronger faith,  
I want to feel the power within,  
I want to feel more love to God,  
I want to feel less love to sin."

So where a want like this is found

I think I may be bold to say,

"The Lord hath laid within that soul  
What hell can never take away."

I have to lament many shortcomings and evil influences of late: unto me belongeth shame and confusion of face. My only plea to the last must be the mercy of God through a crucified Redeemer. "Nothing can preserve my going, but salvation rich and free." I think I may venture to say, there is "a company of two armies:" sometimes I love, sometimes I hate; sometimes hope, sometimes fear, but all teaches me there is no help for me but in Jesus.

He can pardon, He can subdue, He can quicken, He can cure. He is able. I hope, in His blessed name, I shall find Him ready and willing to save me by His Almighty arm, that I may praise Him for ever. Amen. Excuse my saying more just now.

I hope in the love of the Spirit I may subscribe as,  
Your affectionate friend in Him,

Mr. A. J. Baxter.

THOMAS A. WILLIAMS.

## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

**PARADOXES.**—Pilgrims in a strange country, as vessels of mercy in seas of affliction, blessed with grace, and burdened with corruption, endowed with faith, and plagued with unbelief; with patience and peevishness, with submission and opposition, resignation and strong rebellion; meekness and hardness, fortitude and cowardice; a willing mind and reluctant flesh, real obedience, a strong resistance. Persons who act to this character, says Huntington, must expect their path to be this great paradox. The way lies through crooked places made straight, rough places made plain, through darkness and through light, through fire and through water, through tribulation and the way of pleasantness; in deaths often, and alive always; by evil report and by good report; by the shadow of death, and by the path of life; through days of prosperity, and days of adversity;—with much sweetness and a deal of bitterness; heavy crosses and strong consolations; flourishing like a branch, withering like an herb; often refreshed, and often parched; boasting of fatness, and complaining; leaping for joy, and sinking in grief; triumphing of victory, complaining of captivity;—days of laughing, and weeks of mourning; by the valley of vision, and the valley of Baca, by the mount of transfiguration, and by the mount of corruption; with the wings of a dove, and the body of death;—what an in-and-out, round-about journey is this for the christian! This makes the Shulamite (says Huntington) appear as it were the company of two armies—black, but comely,—as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon; as poor, yet having great riches;—foolish, and yet made wise; as the offscouring of the earth, and yet the excellent of it; as base, and yet honourable; as well known, and yet unknown; as illiterate, yet taught of God; as dying, and behold we live; as turners of the world upside down, yet the pillars of it; as pests to society, yet the salt of the earth;—as troublesome inmates, and yet more excellent than their neighbours; as lilies among thorns—as lambs in the midst of wolves.—*Communicated.*

## THE BELIEVER'S STRENGTH.

*"The joy of the Lord is your strength."*—Nehemiah viii. 10.



**CONTRAST** is necessary to make known the proper difference subsisting between things. Darkness set against light, and sorrow against happiness, make the latter to appear the brighter and more blissful. And were the Lord's people strangers to the shadows in experience they would not so enjoy the sunshine when it is granted. There was a great contrast between the glory of Solomon's temple and that which arose under Zerubbabel, and all in favour of the former, so far as material and architectural beauty were concerned. But the Lord, Whose eye rested not like man's with admiration on the gold, silver, marbles and cedars, took a different view of the two buildings, and beholding in it the presence of Him for Whose righteousness's sake He was well-pleased, and Who was to magnify the law and make it honourable, He caused Haggai to say: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Chap. ii. 9.

This was a gracious reason for rebuking the lamentations of the aged who wept as they thought of the disparity between the past and present temples. It was also a great encouragement to the young, who, not remembering the former house, gave vent to their jubilant feelings at seeing this structure begin to rise. The spiritual ones among the motley throng that gathered round Ezra, Nehemiah, and their coadjutors, would learn from Haggai's announcement that the advent of their Lord the Messiah was to be expected in connection with this building, and fresh hopes and praises would be called forth from their hearts to the God of all grace. But the spectacle was full of contrast, and it involved confusion: "The people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off." Ezra iii. 13.

But it was when the weeping predominated at the hearing of "the words of the law"—that law which pronounced the curse, and desolation upon the disobedient people—that Nehemiah and Ezra interposed. Well they knew that

"Repentance without faith  
Is a sore which, never healing,  
Frets and rankles unto death."

They would not therefore have them swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. To realise what that law set forth in all that had befallen their country and countrymen was well. But the Lord



had returned to them with mercies. His face was beginning again to shine on them. His afflicting hand was being removed. They were to prove His unchangeable favour as a covenant God, and that "His mercy endureth for ever." "Go your way," said Nehemiah, "eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto the Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

It is thus the Lord appears to cheer and raise His mourning and desponding people still. Were they to sink overwhelmed with sins, fears, and legal dread of Him, no glory would He reap from their salvation by the work of His dear Son. In the death of Christ "light *was* sown for the righteous;" and in His resurrection it broke forth with Him from the tomb, to be reflected upon them in due season by the work of the Holy Spirit. "For the joy that was set before Him," the Lord Jesus "endured the cross, despising the shame;" and that "Joy" is to be participated in by His redeemed. "Enter thou into THE JOY OF THY LORD," is the greeting that awaits all His beloved ones, who serve Him "in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter:" for it is His OWN JOY—that which He has derived from His pains and toils, the glory following His humiliating abasement. It consists in the eternal light of the Father's countenance; His unqualified approbation of all He has done and suffered, in laying honour and majesty for ever upon Him.

Jesus, as Mediator, is thus STRONG in "the joy of the Lord" the Father. It makes His pleading as His people's advocate irresistible. It crowns Him as the Saviour with all that dignity which He speaks of in His having power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him. John xvii. 2. And the "Joy of salvation" is to the child of God the source of all his spiritual "STRENGTH." Without it, his life is a weary burden, his pathway thorns without a rose. Bound down under conviction; apprehensive of judgment and wrath to come, no pleasure can he take, like the worldling, in the vanities of this world. He has no "strength" for wayfare or warfare only as he receives some token for good, some taste of "the joy of the Lord."

Satan cannot be encountered; the law of God cannot be looked upon with comfort; the world cannot be overcome; the cross providences of his Maker the christian cannot behold working together for his good, unless he is favoured to taste that "the Lord is gracious." To drink deeply of this bliss, he must know his "election of God." He must read his name engraved on the palms of his Redeemer's hands, and on the breast-plate of His heart. He must be favoured

with the Spirit's sealing witness that he is an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ Jesus. And to partake in any humble manner of it, he must have those secret touches which the Holy Ghost, as "the finger of God," now and then vouchsafes, to take away the heart of stone, to melt the affections, influence the desires, and bring him to dissolve under a sense of the Lord's goodness and tender-mercy to him.

The more the soul draws upon and from the fulness of Christ by faith, the more it receives of this *joy*, and the *stronger* it becomes "in the Lord and the power of His might, and in the grace which there is in Christ Jesus." Apart from this it is soon spent and becomes faint and weary. Like a plant unwatered the believer languishes in all the privileges of devotion; in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and in public worship. "The joy of the Lord" gives wings to fly with, yea, it is the constraining power of the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

THE EDITOR.

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### "DEAD TO SIN."

*"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"—Rom. vi. 1, 2.*



SIN is the greatest enemy with which the children of God have to contend; and to those who are kept walking humbly and tenderly with Him, it is a source of continual mourning and grief. The more they are indulged with communion with God, the greater will be the sorrow that

"Siu will to (them) cleave."

And frequently will they long for the time when they shall be freed from the body of sin and death, and serve God without weariness or any sin intermingling.

But with mere professors of religion it is the same in the present day as it ever has been. They, being destitute of the knowledge of God, cannot understand the secret hidden life of a child of God, and consequently affirm that a belief in the doctrines of election, justification by faith, and final perseverance, lead to careless walking and the ignoring of good works. But, blessed be God, we who are of the true circumcision "have not so learned Christ." "We know that we have passed from death unto life," "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," the fruit of which is love to the brethren, and love to *good works*—that we may show forth the praises of Him Who has taught us by His Spirit, and "called us out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Our greatest delight is to honour and glorify Him Who shed His precious blood for us, and "by Whose stripes we are healed." And whilst we rejoice in the blessed fact that our sins are put away for ever by the one offering of Christ Jesus, we mourn on account of sin, our earnest desire being ever to remember that "His Own self bare our sins in His Own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, *should live unto righteousness.*" And we daily seek to God for grace and strength to overcome the sin of our nature, and the corruptions of our hearts; remembering the exhortation: "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind: as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (or *living*. Revised version). Because it is written: Be ye holy; for I am holy."

The more we are favoured with communion with God, the more earnestly shall we press after this holiness, to which we are exhorted in so many places in the Word, and prayerfully seek to be enabled "through the Spirit (to) mortify the deeds of the body," and by dying daily to ourselves and to the world show forth our love to Him in Whom our "Life is hid." "For (we) are dead, and (our) life is hid with Christ in God."

We read in 1 Cor. iii. 16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Owen writes thus: "It is the Spirit Who mortifies and subdues our corruptions, Who quickens us unto life, holiness, and obedience, as *He dwelleth in us*, that He may make and prepare a habitation meet for Himself. The principal reason and motive which we have to attend unto it (the mortification of sin) with all care and diligence as a duty is, that we may thereby preserve His dwelling-place so as becometh His grace and holiness. And indeed, whereas (as our Saviour tells us) they are things which come from and *out of the heart* that defile us; there is no greater or more forcible motive to contend against all the defiling actings of sin, which is our mortification, than this, by the neglect hereof the temple of the Spirit will be defiled."

In another portion he writes: "The Holy Ghost enters into no soul as His habitation, but at the same instant He dethrones sin, spoils it of its dominion, and takes the rule of the soul into the hand of His Own grace. Where He hath effected this work, and brought His adversary into subjection, there He will dwell, though sometimes His habitation be troubled by His subdued enemy. The souls and minds of them who are really sanctified, have continually such a sprinkling with the blood of Christ, and are so continually

purified by virtue from His sacrifice and oblation, as that they are never unused habitations for the Holy Spirit of God."

How wondrous and humbling the thought, that God by His Spirit condescends to dwell in such as we! according to His gracious declaration: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." When by faith we are enabled to realize this inestimable blessing, "that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit," and are favoured with even a little taste of His love—a glimpse of those unsearchable riches which we possess in Christ Jesus,—how we are filled with wonder, love, delight, and admiration, and ardently wish that we could always enjoy the experience of these blessings, and walk in them to the honour of God. But, alas! when we would do good evil is present with us.

—Our best is stained and dyed with sin.

Our all is nothing worth.

And we often walk with our heads bowed down on account of that sin which mars all with which we have to do.

Those who are enemies to the doctrines of the Bible-Calvinistic doctrines as they are stated, because they were professed and taught by that eminent servant of God, Calvin are utter strangers to the soul-humbling views true children of God have of themselves, or of the sighs and groans that ascend to the Throne of grace on account of that sin which dwelleth in them.

So far from feeling that they may walk carelessly, and wilfully sin, because they are blessed with a sweet assurance that their sins are forgiven, and that God will perfect that which concerneth them and enable them to persevere unto the end, never leaving or forsaking them; their greatest trial is that sin dwells in their nature, and they know that unless they watch unto prayer, and diligently fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil, they will continually be foiled in the conflict, grieve the Holy Spirit, and dishonour Him Who has redeemed them with His blood. Then, instead of walking in the enjoyment of that peace "which passeth all understanding," God will withdraw His presence, will hide His face from them, chasten them for their iniquities, and permit them to go in dark paths at a distance from Himself. And to those who have been favoured to enjoy a close walking with God, it is indeed a bitter trial to find their "Beloved has withdrawn Himself, and 'is' gone," and to come into the experience of the words: "I sought Him, but I could not find Him, I called Him, but He gave me no answer."

We know that in all ages there ever has been, and in future ever will be, a diversity amongst God's children. And it is a great mercy for those who are so kept by the mighty power of God that

they do not sin openly, or walk wickedly, and thus dishonour Him Whom they profess to serve.

We are compassed about with a body of infirmity; the heart is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, and our evil nature leads us into temptation: added to which our great adversary Satan, is ever "going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," and various are the specious forms in which he tempts the children of God.

They who go astray have to suffer deeply on account of the error of their ways under the chastening hand of God, and none but themselves know what they pass through under the hidings of His countenance, through fear that they have neither part nor lot in the matter. But blessed be God, He will remember His covenant with them, and they "shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

It is indeed an infinite mercy and blessing to have an assurance that God will never forsake the work of His Own hands, but will subdue sin in us by the indwelling of His Spirit; giving us victory through the blood of the Lamb, conforming us to His image, and enabling us to maintain the conflict between the old and new natures, until He calls us to lay down the former, and takes us to be with Himself for ever and ever.

"Sinners! join the heavenly powers,  
For redemption all is ours;  
None but burdened sinners prove  
Blood-bought pardon, dying love."

Then may we take courage and go forward in the strength of Him Who has conquered sin for us, and has promised that we shall be more than conquerors through Him.

And may we by our lives deny the assertions which are cast upon the truth of God, and show that, by the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts, we are constrained to love and serve Him, our greatest grief being to grieve Him in Whom is all our delight, happiness, and blessing.

Thus, with mingled feelings of gratitude to God for all His infinite mercies, and with grief for our manifold iniquities and short-comings, may we look back upon the present year which is drawing to a close; and with praise and confession plead the merits of the dearly beloved Son of God, and beg that we may be enabled in His strength to go forth conquering and to conquer, and by our daily walk and conversation in the future, adorn the doctrines of God our Saviour.

"In Thy presence I can conquer,  
I can suffer, I can die;  
Far from Thee I faint and languish,  
O, my Saviour, keep me nigh."

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Cambs.

IOTA.

## THE LORD'S VISITS.

## No. VII.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. FALKNER.

Margate, October 24th, 1817.

Dear Friend,—I am much obliged by your kind letter, which I should have answered before, but have been very busy. Our friend Mrs. P. sends her kind love to you. She is at present as well as can be expected; very happy in the midst of a great many troubles, and I doubt not will so continue, it being the happy lot of those who live on *Christ alone*; unto which attainment I trust (through the grace of God given you in Christ Jesus before the world began) you are pressing forward. It gave me much pleasure to read the account of the Lord's meeting you while reading the third sermon of Dr. Crisp. I have no doubt in my mind of your being brought to a satisfaction of your everlasting interest in Christ Jesus.

These visits are often a prelude to a clear manifestation: these are the cords of love with which the Lord has promised to draw His people to Himself. The church maketh this declaration, that, "the Lord hath appeared of old, saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee;" and doth beg that God would so draw her, and leaveth this testimony that He hath so drawn her. And the remembrance of it is more sweet than wine—that it leaves an abiding sense of the same in the soul—that it removes those clouds of darkness out of the mind—manifests how the Lord makes a new heart—how He renews the will—enlightens the understanding and turns us from darkness to His marvellous light—which is the forgiveness of our sins—where the inheritance of the saints lies, even in the everlasting fulness of Christ. This drawing of the Father begetteth hope in the soul. It is by this love manifested in the heart that we are enabled to believe. It is this love that casts out our guilty fears. It is in this love we are enabled to cry, "Abba, Father"; and our consciences are purged from dead works, that we may serve God in newness of life, and not in the works of the flesh. It is in this love that we embrace Christ as our only Husband, and are held in perpetual wedlock to Him.

In this love we are enabled to bring forth fruit unto God; to hold on our way, and bear up under every discouragement: the Lord having promised, "the righteous shall hold on his way, and wax stronger and stronger." It is this love of God manifest in my heart that is the most clear evidence of my election; this is the bond of the eternal union of my soul to Christ. Love is the substance of all the merits of Christ. Love manifest in my heart produces all

the graces of the Spirit, and brings them into lively exercise. Love will never fail: it is the fulfilling of the law: it removes the power of unbelief and makes sin truly hateful. It is love that lifts me above the curse of the law, the wrath of God, and the forebodings of eternal death. Love teaches me to despise the frowns of the world; it enlarges my heart, and produces repentance that shall never be repented of again. Love is the feast of fat things; the river of life; it keeps my soul in perfect peace; it is springing up in the heart of him that believeth in Jesus unto eternal life. Love quenches all the fiery darts of the devil, and all the lusts of the flesh. By this love we shall be kept blameless in body, soul, and spirit, before God. This shall be the support of our soul on a dying bed; and this love of God we shall enjoy to all eternity. In the manifest favour of God our mountain stands strong; it is in His absence we are troubled. It was in the sensible presence of Christ that the disciples' hearts burned within them; but in His absence we fall into great darkness. This should teach us two things; first, that it is a distinguishing mercy of God for us at any time to enjoy His favour; secondly, that we can not retain it by any power that we possess, which should teach us to look up to God alone in Christ Jesus for His presence to be manifest in the most lively sense in our minds; that we may continually enjoy the blessed state of them that know the joyful sound of free grace flowing through the Redeemer's blood—that we may walk in the light of His countenance all the day long, and make mention of Christ's righteousness only—that we may go on from day to day receiving out of His fulness grace upon grace, that we may be rooted and grounded, settled, strengthened and established in Christ, and so be delivered from the works of the law.

"Now he that is entered into Christ, ceaseth from his own works as God did from His," being complete in Christ. This is our only place of perpetual rest, and to this I hope it will please the good Lord to bring you: but till you enjoy it, you will at all times experience dark seasons. Yet be not discouraged, for light will come in the morning. Were I to write much to you on the subject of darkness, I should present to your imagination things so gloomy and wretched, which make their appearance in the absence of the true light; such awful scenes of wickedness in the human heart as would make you shudder! The wickedness of the heart cannot be easily set forth, when the unclean beasts of the forest do creep forth. There is unbelief, the root from whence all evil proceeds: there is calling in question the truth of the Bible—the merits of the Son of God—the love of God to His church—the operation of the Spirit—the very being of a God. The fool hath said in his heart "There is

no God." It is by the discovery of these things I am made a witness "that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" that "the thoughts of the heart are only evil, and that continually;" and that "he that trusts in his own heart is a fool." In this darkness I have envied the happiness of every living creature, being filled with all the blasphemies of Satan. I have had the same thoughts Job's wife had, with every evil thought, I think, that ever passed through the mind of any human creature, and never did I find that I possessed any power to relieve myself, until it pleased the good Lord to manifest His love to my soul and chase the powers of darkness away; causing me to enjoy His loving-kindness, in which I could rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. While this lasted I could go on happily, and under such visits have hardly known whether I have been in the body or out. I divided that part of your letter which respects yourself and God's dealings with your soul, into three parts: first, the manifest love of God to your soul: secondly, the darkness that followed—this was the way the Lord was pleased to lead me: thirdly, the only refuge of the soul in the dark.

It is an unspeakable mercy to every quickened soul, that before he beholds the light of life, Christ Jesus, he has the privilege of going to God in prayer in his sins, uncovered, and in his blood: and in this state the Holy Spirit is pleased to indite his petitions. God is pleased to receive them in the merits of Christ, and to manifest His great mercy to the soul by enlightening him in the knowledge of Christ; by giving him hope, and encouraging him at all times to come to a throne of grace, in all cases and conditions, in the midst of his sins. In my last I endeavoured to draw your attention to the way in which it has pleased God to appear for His people in their greatest distress and difficulties; making manifest the most conspicuous deliverances in answer to prayer. These things must be observed, or how shall we come to live by faith? and till then we can only live by sense, just as my good friend does when the Lord is pleased to shine in her soul. When the soul is taken up into oneness with Christ, the life is then enjoyed; there is the light too in the Word to guide my way; a straight way which there is no turning out. This is hard to be believed by those who hover about the mount; but I hope it will please the Lord to lead you to walk only in this way, and you will find it a way of continual pleasantness, and the paths peace. In this way you will see the blessedness of all the invitations and promises—the comfort of the word—the security of the oath—the blessings of the everlasting covenant, which contains the fulness of a sinner's salvation. Access to a throne of grace is a privilege peculiar to the elect of



God: it is what no natural son of Adam ever did enjoy, or ever will in that state! It belongs to the election of grace, and is made known by regeneration in the heart; one blessed fruit of the Spirit's dwelling in our heart is the great power of God manifest in delivering us out of the kingdom of Satan, and translating us into the kingdom of God's dear Son, by Whom we have access into the presence of the Father through the merits of Christ alone. One great evidence of our election is, the faith and power of God, by which we believe. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." In my last I attempted to show you, that the throne of grace was the only safe and certain way for any to go in, carrying all their troubles there, whether of mind, body, or estate, and I am a witness that the Lord is a God that heareth and answereth the cries of the needy. By the Lord's answer I have in a measure been enabled to live by faith; and by the gracious answers He shall be pleased to give you, you shall be enabled to trust in the Lord daily, and to know that, what He is to you in the most prosperous state of your soul, He is in the darkest—that He is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever."

Give my best respects to Mrs. K., and I hope from this time to her death she will know nothing, in point of dependence for salvation, but Christ and Him crucified. Tell her it is a great satisfaction to me to believe that my sins were placed to the account of Christ, and that in His payment I obtained a full discharge. My kind love to the little babe that used to refuse the breast of consolation. I am happy to learn that she grows and begins to run alone. Tell her to look well to her standing; to see that it is in Christ alone, to look straight forward unto Him, and if she should fall down, to go to the fountain to wash, and not to dirty water.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

N. F.

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### NAMES AND CHARACTERS OF OUR GRACIOUS LORD.

*(Continued from page 341.)*

His names are like ointments of holiest savour ;	
They speak our Beloved, they breathe of His favour.	
The Breaker to level impassable mountains ;	
The shadowing Branch by perennial fountains :	
The only-Begotten, and Brightness of God,	
Who spread the blue heavens like a curtain abroad,	}
But maketh the heart of the meek His abode.	

The Bearer of Burdens we could not have borne;  
 The Bishop to comfort the weak and forlorn.  
 A cluster of Camphire, a bundle of Myrrh,  
 A Buckler to all who would serve Him in fear.  
 Our Brother, Who reigns all events to control;  
 The Bruiser of Satan, the Bread of the soul,  
 And the Bridegroom, Who married a destitute one,  
 And gave her His nature, His joy and His throne.  
 O Saviour, my spirit rejoiceth in Thee!  
 Thy bountiful mercy, that floweth to me,  
 Hath depths that no wisdom created may trace,  
 And heights that are lost in the heavens of Thy grace.

C. H. M.

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### THE SONGS OF HEZEKIAH.

*"The Lord was ready to save me : therefore we will sing my songs on the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord."* Isaiah xxxviii. 20.

No. 3.

(Psalm cxvi. *Continued from page 310.*)

**T**HE storm over, the tempest-tossed soul can review its past perils and remember its feelings and its fears in connection with its deliverances. It is thus Hezekiah details his experience in what he had gone through. "I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: I said in my haste, All men are liars." Psalm cxvi. 10, 11. What was the nature of his faith? What that of his hasty unbelief? Hezekiah's faith rested, in its chief aspect, in the promise of the Messiah, and the resurrection from death in union with Him; for the apostle says, "We having the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you," 2 Cor. iv. 13, 14. In thus speaking Paul quotes distinctly what we regard as Hezekiah's words in the Psalm under consideration. Nor will the fact of the gracious king's unwillingness to die invalidate the fact of his firm belief in the resurrection of the just. Job sank quite as low, yet affirmed his faith in the same glorious truth. Chap. xix. 24-26: although Dr. Kinto and others have cast a doubt on the meaning of Job's words.

But further, Hezekiah believed the promise of Jehovah's national covenant, that long "life and favour" were in general the portion of

those who observed His worship, whatever exception to the rule might in the mystery of His providence occasionally be exhibited. But his own case seemed to form a painful exception, and the rising power of unbelief led him in his haste to say, "All men are liars." That is, all who had spoken to him of long life and prosperity in the service of Jehovah had apparently deceived him: as his words in Isaiah xxxviii. declare: "I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave, I am deprived of the residue of my years: Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: He will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me," vers. 10, 12.

In the bitter hasty cry of "All men are liars," Isaiah himself may also have been included; for had he not written: "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings?" chap. iii. 10; and again: "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land?" Chap. i. 19. But how could Hezekiah thus feast if he were to be cut off in the prime of his life? It is thus that the Lord's providence often seems at variance with His promises; and "no man knoweth love or hatred (on the part of God towards him) by all that is before him" in prosperity or adversity. This crossing of the hands in the bestowment of the blessing has called forth many a "Not so, my father," from perplexed Reason; and it has invariably been silenced by, "I know it, Myson, I know it," Gen. xlviii. 18, 19. Nor shall the charge of falsehood or faithlessness ever rest on the dealings of a covenant God; for

"His word shall stand, His truth prevail;  
And not one jot or tittle fail."

How powerfully is this illustrated in the succeeding sentence: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"—Words perfectly analagous to the king's language in Isaiah: "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and Himself hath done it." Chap. xxxviii. 15. The resemblance between the two utterances is too great to admit of much doubt on the part of any that they came from the lips of the same person. O, it is blessed to be so vanquished by the Lord's goodness as to be at a loss what to say and what to do in honour of His holy name. A broken heart, a melting spirit, an overflowing soul can only be produced by His loving kindness and tender mercy. Overwhelmed by the display of the Lord's regard for him, Hezekiah sinks in abasement at His feet, and while utterly at a loss to make any worthy return, exclaims, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows un

to the Lord now in the presence of all His people." Vers. 13, 14. All he could present was an acknowledgement—and that should be public as well as private. "In the presence of all His people," he would magnify Jehovah's grace as it had been extended to him. With "the cup of salvation" in his hand he would approach the Lord, and proclaim Him as the Almighty Redeemer of his soul from destruction and his body from death, and testify that all he had passed through had been for his good. And with this his words in Isaiah accord: "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt Thou recover me, and make me to live."

This restoration to life leads up to the beautiful passage which follows in Psalm cxvi.: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints," ver. 15. And this is parallel with that sweet declaration: "He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in His sight." Ps. lxxii. 14. The high estimation in which Jehovah holds His people is hereby exhibited. In all His dispensations He is jealous of their well-being. His words, "Since thou wast precious in My sight thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee," proclaim His purposes to be directed wholly to their welfare; so that their death, in its time, place, and manner, is as particularly ordered as their life in all its supplies. Hence every believer may sing:

"Plagues and deaths around me fly,  
Till He bids I cannot die:  
Not a single shaft can hit  
Till the God of love sees fit."

This was the burden of this part of Hezekiah's song. His omnipotent Friend had arrested the stroke of death and granted a fresh lease of life to the extent of 15 years in full.

So kind an interposition bound him in affection closer and closer to his God: "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds." Ver. 16. But why does Hezekiah speak of his mother as the Lord's handmaid? Was it because she was His steadfast worshipper, while her husband, the infamous Ahaz, was steeped in idolatry. Her name we are told was Abi, and that she was the daughter of Zachariah, 2 Kings xviii. 2. David also refers to his mother by the same term: "Save the son of Thine handmaid," Psalm lxxxvi. 16; and it does seem to imply she also was a godly woman; a true daughter of Sarah. And if this were so in Hezekiah's case, remembering how great the influence of the eastern mother over her offspring even to years of maturity, it is not at all improbable that her instruction, and the tuition of those she employed

to aid her in her efforts, were the means by which the Holy Spirit preserved him from the contamination that on every hand abounded, and led him to cleave to Jehovah and His worship in secrecy. In no other way can we trace the leading of the Lord in this good king's conduct. He was twenty years old when he began to reign, but, like Josiah, he instantly began the work of an evangelical reformation. It may be remembered that our Edward VI. said, "he was brought up among the women" until he was about six years old, and in his ninth year he ascended the throne. And none with propriety can dispute the fact that the Lord has largely used the influence of woman to impress the truths of the Gospel in early life on the minds of His people, and probably to an extent man has never been employed.

But, whatever the instrumentality, the work on Hezekiah's soul was the Lord's. "THOU," says he, "hast loosed my bonds." He therefore almost repeats his soul's resolution: "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord." Vers. 17-19. In reply to his interrogation, "What is the sign that I shall go up unto the house of the Lord?" he had received the assurance, "On the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord," 2 Kings xx. 5. This was truly miraculous. That in the course of so short a period "the deadly boil" should be so thoroughly cured and his strength so completely restored that he should be able to take part in the temple service was, humanly speaking, impossible. But not so with God. Blessedly was he brought to prove this. His youth renewed as the eagle's, he rises from his sick couch, and with holy joy enters "the courts of the Lord's house," in the midst of his beloved Jerusalem, and there he pays the vows of thanksgiving which his mouth had spoken and his lips had uttered when he was in trouble, while the loud refrain of hallelujah rends the skies, as the godly unite with their loved monarch in praise to Jehovah, who had averted a national calamity by preserving their king.

In all this there is "the deep that coucheth beneath." This Psalm was composed for Zion's use in all future ages, while it constituted the expression of Hezekiah's special and personal experience. The sorrows, the prayer, the deliverance, the loving gratitude, the heart-felt praise, set forth in its contents, are all portrayed in what God's people still are made acquainted with, in the Lord's work on their souls and the trials and tribulation in the world. The conclusion of the whole matter is the turning of a

sore captivity, and the breaking forth of light in the midst of darkness, and the resounding of hallelujah where silent gloom threatened to prevail for ever. "Praise ye the Lord," is the keynote for all God's children to take up the strain and join the chorus; and when the Lord appears to their joy, they can do this with the same ease and comfort as before it was impossible. In Hezekiah's case, and in that of all the elect poor and needy, who cry day and night unto the Lord, the promise is fulfilled: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me:" for the Lord hath not said to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye Me in vain."

"His very word of grace is strong  
As that which built the skies;  
The voice that rolls the stars along  
Speaks all the promises."

THE EDITOR.

(Psalms cxvii. and cxviii. to follow).

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## DID OUR LORD WASH THE FEET OF JUDAS ISCARIOT?

Dear Sir,



see it stated in the latter portion of the sermon by Mr. Grace in this month's "G. A.," page 328, bottom line, that Jesus washed Judas' feet. After a careful comparison of all the four evangelists, I have almost come to the conclusion that Judas Iscariot was not present either at the washing of the disciples' feet, or at the Lord's supper. But upon a further examination, there is a question arises in my mind as to which supper is referred to when our dear Lord humbled Himself to teach His disciples this lesson of brotherly love, and washed their feet.

As the Apostle John is the only one who gives the account of the washing of the disciples' feet, it seems to me the second verse of the thirteenth chapter might be supposed to take up the narrative again from the ninth verse of the twelfth chapter, and so connect the washing of the disciples' feet with the supper held in the house of Simon the leper, at Bethany. See Matt. xxvi. 6 and 10 verses. Mark xiv. 3 and 10 verses. It was at this supper that Judas took offence at the reproof he received for finding fault with the use of the precious ointment. The Apostle John leaves no room for doubt on this matter, as he says that it was Judas

Iscaiot who said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" He further says, "This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare (bore) what was put therein." If this supposition is correct that the second verse of the thirteenth chapter of John connects, or takes up afresh, the narrative of the twelfth chapter, ninth verse, then all the evangelists agree that it was two days before the passover that Satan "put it into the heart of Judas Iscaiot to betray Jesus," and three of them agree that it was after the reproof he received for finding fault with the use of the precious ointment; and that from thence he went to the chief priests to make his bargain. See also Luke xxii. 3-5.

Then I think we can gather from a careful comparison of all the evangelists that all the twelve were present at the Paschal Supper; and that while eating the Paschal Supper Jesus made the important announcement: "One of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me." Then comes the questioning amongst the disciples "who it should be that should do this thing." Peter beckoned to John that he should ask of whom He spake. "Jesus answered, he it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when He had dipped the sop, He gave it to Judas Iscaiot, the son of Simon ..... He then having received the sop went immediately out." John xiii. 24-30. There is no account in John of the institution of the Lord's Supper, so that all he relates is confined to the Paschal Supper. And as there was no sop in the Lord's Supper, it appears to me the Lord's Supper was instituted after Judas had departed; and that the address from the 31st verse of the xiii. chapter to the end of the xiv. chapter of John was given before they departed to the Mount of Olives; where I think Jesus spoke the xv. xvi. and xvii. chapters of John. And the beginning of the xviii. chapter says that Jesus went with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden.

Dear Mr. Editor,—If you think this will be useful to provoke the readers of "G. A." to a diligent study of the holy Scriptures, I pray God we may each and all of us enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit to teach and lead us into all truth, for His name's sake. Amen.

Leicester, Nov. 7th, 1882.

J. W.

[The above explanation quite meets our view of the matter, while it throws light upon a very important subject. THE EDITOR.]

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## A REMARKABLE ESCAPE.

[The following was narrated in a letter to one closely related to us, and as it is from the pen of one whom the Lord met with many years since under our ministry, we feel the greater interest in the case. It is indeed marvellous how the writer should have escaped, but for many years she has been the special subject of the Lord's kind providential care, and, above all, of the exceeding riches of His grace. THE EDITOR.]

South Devon, Oct. 24, 1882.

My dear Friend,



HAVE indeed great cause for much thankfulness to the Lord for all His love and goodness in providing me with such a home, where such great and precious privileges are mine, and no one in the least interferes with me in anything.

I must tell you of a narrow escape I had by the sea, getting shut in by the tide. Having gone to Teignmouth, and intending to walk on the sea wall to Dawlish, which is about two miles, and a lovely walk—there are two walls, one above the other, and the upper one parts the railway, while the lower one is to walk on. At high tide the sea overflows both walls. I was on the lower one, and there being seats I sat for some time watching the sea, which was very rough, and being in deep thought did not notice the tide. I suddenly bethought myself, and, looking round, to my horror found myself shut in, and not a soul about. The sea on my right hand had reached the upper wall, and very high rocks were on my left. My only way of escape was to climb the wall and drop on the railway. My great fear was that if a train came out of the tunnel close by I must be killed, as it was a single line. With a great deal of trouble I got on the wall, the sea spray coming on me as fast as possible. I could not hear any train coming, for the noise of the sea. Then I was frightened to drop, it was so steep; and after hanging on as long as possible with my hands I let go, and it shook me dreadfully. The moment I stepped off the line, getting close to the rock, a train rushed out of the tunnel. Had it come but a minute sooner I certainly must have been killed. The engine driver looked after me as far as he could see. Then I had to walk along the line to find a way out, and found I had to get over another wall and drop into a lonely-looking lane. (I heard afterwards that it was called Smugglers' Lane). The drop was much deeper than the other. However I did it it is impossible to tell, and not to be hurt in the least, only shaken. I cried for joy when safe.

So I am sure the Lord's continued goodness and mercy have been over me. He heard my prayer for help on that sea wall. I am pretty mindful now how I go about the sea. All my friends that have seen the place of my adventure say, they cannot understand



however I escaped being hurt in some way. But the Lord's great care and goodness have been constantly over me, as I have proved over and over again, and I can say, "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life." He has been my shield in many dangers, seen and unseen, up to the present; and I love Him, because He hath heard my cry many times in trouble, and I have found in Him a faithful and unchanging friend. Although at best there is a sadness in my life, and the prayer that suits me best is, "God be merciful to me a sinner," yet at times, when perhaps reading His word to the sick, such a ray of light enters my own soul, as to draw out such joy and love as to make me feel He is still my Lord and God. Then He is so unspeakably precious to me, that I could wish He were always thus nigh. I should then have nothing to wish or to fear; my summer would last all the year.

I do sincerely trust that you are favoured with much of the Lord's presence in these your last days, and that at eventide may it be light. So prays

Your very sincere friend,

S. A. G.

## PERSONAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

### A NONAGENARIAN'S TESTIMONY.

Maresfield, March 6th, 1882.

My dear Friend,—I hope you and Mrs. Baxter, and your dear mother and daughter, are all well.....As to myself, I can only say the outer man is fast failing, afflictions increase upon me, and the flesh will have so much attention and sympathy, it prevents me from enjoying better things; but our good Lord is very loving and pitiful—"He knoweth our frame, and remembereth we are but dust." We read, "Happy is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help." Jacob seemed sometimes like me, a poor worm; but when heavy trials and great enemies came upon him, his God was always a present help—according to His promise—in trouble. I have but few companions to commune with; sometimes have friends come, and bring a little bit of iron with them, and when we can strike a light, I find

It warms our cold hearts with heavenly heat,  
And sets our souls on fire.

How nice is a little heavenly love and heat! It brings former times to our remembrance. Before I knew I was truly born again, I remember I could not sleep for many nights, fearing I should be lost and go to hell. I then read and prayed many nights, searching the Bible for

all the promises I could find. There were many very suitable, but one passage always followed: "My soul refuses to be comforted." And much afraid was I the convictions would pass away, and I only bring forth wind. But after many long nights and days, the change came from misery to joy, and "peace passing all understanding." At the time I was building a stack of corn. I seemed to feel as if I was in another world. I had a little Bible in my pocket. How glad I was to get under a tree or hedge to read the 103rd Psalm. The first verses came to me with peace and joy, and abode with me many days. It was in the year 1816. Everything was a pleasure; work was no toil; there seemed a charm in the prong in my hand. But, alas! soon after this deliverance I had to endure a great fight of afflictions; but my broken heart and contrite spirit taught me that good lesson the apostle said he had learnt: in whatsoever state he was in he had learned to be content. He knew how to be abased and how to abound. I was kept so humble I could kiss the ground. "Before honour is humility." After some time my faith was tried and honoured by the good Lord. I have been sometimes lately almost ready to ask to be born again, although that was done almost 70 years ago.

Your love and old age must cover all mistakes.

Ever yours in the best of bonds,

D. WELLER.

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ANOTHER AGED TESTIMONY.

Fareham.

Dear Mr. Baxter,—We feel exceedingly interested in what you have written on immortal Hart's hymn 49th, "When deaf to every warning given." The riches conveyed to our minds while reading and perusing the same, causes a fresh rising beam to spring up in our hearts, under the influence of the Holy Ghost; uniting us heart to heart, seeing and feeling as we do that he that sows and they that reap may well rejoice together;—putting cause and effect side by side, and in ploughing, digging, and in searching, we plough, dig, and search in the same field, for the same Pearl; and in thus working out what is wrought within, we safely conclude we have not, and shall not labour in vain, knowing the Great Husbandman has said, "The labour of the righteous tendeth to life"; and where the root of the matter is it produces a fertile branch, that beareth the fruit in its kind,—as I once heard from the mouth of old Mr. John Vinall while preaching in a malthouse at Stedham. Speaking of the sower that went forth to sow, he described four sorts of hearers in their characters. Some seed fell into good ground, and the good ground he described as an

honest and good heart; and an honest and good heart is a heart made so by God the Holy Ghost. And I can witness to the truth of the same: for at that time I found in my heart the very opposite to everything that was honest and good; and to this day I feel that if there is anything good it is put there. It is the Holy Spirit's power by which alone we can work out our own salvation, though it be with much trembling, and mixed with filial fear; we still plough in hope and sow in hope; and at the time pray He will fulfil His promise: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the (seemingly) dry land springs of (living) water."

That the Lord may strengthen your hands, and give you by His Spirit tokens for good, both to your own comfort and to the souls of those favoured to sit under your present and future ministrations, is and shall be the prayer of

GEO. OAKSHOTT.

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AN AGED VILLAGE PASTOR.

Dear Sir,—I have as usual enclosed the stamps for the *Gospel Advocate*. I sincerely hope yourself, Mrs. Baxter, family and friends are quite well. My earnest desire and prayer is, that the "Characteristics of the present Age" may be the means of bringing many to consider the true position in which they stand before Him unto Whom all hearts are open; all desires known; and from Whom no secrets are hid; that sleepers may awake and arise from their death-like slumber and trim their lamps, so that when the Bridegroom cometh they may be prepared to meet Him. A godly woman once told me that she had prayed I might have a watchful spirit. I am quite satisfied she did, for I was made more watchful than I had hitherto been. Another, whom I was lodging with, and used to speak a few words in prayer with of a morning, begged that I might have a greater discernment of the doctrine of election. Although I had previously been brought into it, I certainly had more distinct views afterwards.

What a rich blessing it is to be with the Lord's praying people! What an unspeakable favour for the dear Lord to pour out upon the purchased of His blood the Spirit of grace and supplications, by which they have access through Himself unto the Father. What a close communion there is with the Lord and His beloved Zion! Though she is apparently hidden, and though too many of her children are in a cold, lukewarm state, with but little signs of spiritual life, yet she is not dead! True, she is in a slumbering condition;

nothing seems to arouse her. Notwithstanding, when the Spirit puts power into the call, recorded in Isaiah lii., "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. Shake thyself from the dust, O captive daughter of Zion," then will she come forth as "a bride adorned for her husband."

"What Christ has said must be fulfilled;  
On this firm rock believers build;  
His word shall stand, His truth prevail,  
And not one jot or tittle fail."

I desire to give glory to Him to Whom alone it is due, that He does not leave me in the pulpit to put my own construction on His pure and holy word, nor suffer me to darken counsel with words without knowledge. May I ever be enabled to join in with King William III. of most blessed memory, who said to the bishops of the Church of England in body assembled, after making a speech which well deserves to be written in letters of gold, "I trust it will not be supposed I am speaking to you a speech which I have got by heart; no, I am declaring to you my real and genuine sentiments. The words which you hear from me, are indeed spoken with my mouth, but they flow from my heart." I cannot but believe he obeyed my dear Lord and Master's exhortations, and having had a real desire for the water of life created in him, came to Christ and drank; and that it was in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." "Understanding," Solomon says—who asked for wisdom and received it from the Lord—"is a well-spring of life to him that hath it." If we possess that "we know that the Son of God is come," as well as if we had seen Him when on earth, for He hath set up His kingdom in our hearts, and "hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and we are found in Him that is true. This is the true God and eternal life."

No more with trembling heart I try  
A multitude of things;  
Still wishing to find out that point  
From whence salvation springs.  
My anchor's cast—cast in a rock,  
Where I shall ever rest  
From all the labour of my thoughts,  
Or workings of my breast.


What is my anchor? if you ask  
A hungry, helpless mind,  
Diving with misery for its weight,  
'Til firmest ground it find.  
What is my rock? 'tis Jesus Christ,  
Whom faithless eyes pass o'er;  
Yet there poor sinners anchor may,  
And ne'er be shaken more.

Yours in the Lord,

C. H.

## THE ROD AND ITS APPOINTER.

*"Who knoweth not in all these (things) that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Job xi. 9.*

F it is Jehovah Who gathers the winds in His fists, and measures the waters in the hollow of His hand; if He has not resigned His control, in these modern days of intellectual progress, over the laws and forces of Nature, but still "rideth upon the wings of the wind," and causeth the rain to come, "whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy," then may we be sure that the hand of the Lord has of late been visibly outstretched against England. Let whatever imaginary influence be attributed to the comet which this year has visited us, the conclusion with every true believer must be the same, that that (still mysterious) phenomenon is as much under the Lord's authority as either of the elements we have named. And if it has had to do with the wild gales and descending torrents which have wrought such havoc on the continent, and produced such floods in Britain, the whole is the Lord's doing and not man's. For man, with all his proud boasting, is as impotent as ever in directing, regulating, or restraining the force of the wind and water, when they receive their command from above to accomplish their work of devastation.

Many and great were the apprehensions as to the fate of the harvest in the month of August last. The intermittent but superabundant rain threatened to destroy all the hopes of the husbandman. But mercy interposed. The crops were ingathered, and their yield in many places surpassed the anticipations of the most sanguine. And while gladness of heart, if not God-honouring thankfulness and acknowledgment—for there is a vast difference between the two—was yet rejoicing in the results of the past summer and autumn, dark and threatening clouds have arisen on every hand, as if to dash from the lips the cup of consolation with serious apprehensions of what may be in the forthcoming year.

And "is there not a cause" for this? Let it be remembered that the Lord Jesus, in His ascension glory as mediator, is invested by the Father with absolute authority over all worlds; that the government is upon His shoulders; that He bears up the pillars of the earth, and directs the course of all events. Let it be remembered that He has received this authority over the earth, on the ground of what He did and suffered upon it. That, as the last Adam, His rule over all creatures is to be without a rival, and to be acknowledged by all under pain of Jehovah's wrathful displeasure, Psalm ii. 10-12. Let all this be borne in mind, and then let it be noted how His two principal adversaries, Popery and Infidelity, are up in arms against Him everywhere, and, backed up by the powers that

be, are challenging Him to His face with all the boldness of blasphemous presumption and defiance, while they who fear the Lord and think upon His name are hid in a corner, their wisdom despised and their words not heard, Eccles. ix. 16.

Our rulers and nobility are for the most part hand-and-glove with Rome. Nearly every ecclesiastical and political appointment is made in favour of its partisans. The clergy in the Establishment are increasingly joining the Jesuitical class of High Churchmen. These love popery heart and soul, but think they may have it without the Pope; and they would be as tyrannical persecutors as the Dominican Inquisitors were the power to be granted them. On the other hand, bold Infidelity under various names and guises works equally among broad churchmen and *agnostic* dissenters, while among the labouring masses it shows itself unveiled in all the hideousness of Freethinking, its horrid pamphlets blaspheming the sacred persons of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the most ribald manner, insomuch that one can only marvel at "the riches of the goodness and forbearance and long suffering" which abstains from launching forth the thunderbolts of fury against such impious workers of iniquity, and consuming them in a moment.

The miracles of former days, as recorded in Scriptures, these wretches ridicule as so many myths. But it is their mercy that if the display of such supernatural wonders has ceased, so have those frequent and personal manifestations of Divine vengeance, which in those olden times so often brought overwhelming destruction in a moment on the proud and haughty gainsayers. It may be that in many an instance in which our amazement is excited at the Lord permitting such rebels to go on unsmitten, it is for the sake of those ordained to spring from them, and towards whom His thoughts are "of peace, and not of evil, to give them an expected end"; even "His Own elect."

But judgments in general, and sometimes of a special and personal nature, still make known their righteous Sender, and "the wicked," as of old, becomes "snared in the work of his own hands." Ps. ix. 16. The Lord has not quitted His throne in the heavens, and "His eyes behold and His eyelids try the children of men" as certainly now as in the days of David. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 13. The designs of Satan, through his many agents, to regain his lost dominion and to re-establish the prevailing abominations of Popery and Ritualism may be, and doubtless are, skilfully contrived; but "there is no counsel or device against the Lord." He "will work; and who shall let it?" To expect our carnal and time-serving

senators and ecclesiastics, and nonconformist leading sects and men to come out boldly on the Lord's side, and expose themselves to opprobrium for the truth's sake, is a delusion in which too many share; for "the world will love its own."

What Job says of his so-called friends, when comparing them to the evaporating waters of an Eastern brook, that may Zion say of nearly all in political and ecclesiastical place and power in England. We may paraphrase it thus: "What time they (i.e. the brooks) wax warm (in party conflict) they vanish (through influences brought to bear on them by Rome's agents); when it (the prospect of unpopularity) is hot, they are consumed out of their place (they disappear and fail when most wanted). The paths of their way are turned aside (from England's welfare to Rome's profit); they go to nothing (in their protestant principles) and perish (in respect of all they have promised). The troops of Tema (their confiding constituents, and expectant adherents), looked (for them to act faithfully), the companies of Sheba, (the protesting portion of the community) waited for them (to take action against the proud pretensions of the Papacy). They were confounded because they had hoped (in man instead of God only), they came thither (to parliament and the ecclesiastical courts for redress), and were ashamed" Job vi. 17-20. Thus the old saying is still verified: "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

Were the hearts of all the Lord's ministers and people united in beseeching Him to arise and plead His own cause, and their eyes removed from party and sectarian borders to the welfare of our spiritual Zion, we should have far more hopes of a change for the better than we can anticipate from a confidence that rests in Conservative or Liberal statesmen and their policies, or in the dead Protestantism of self-seeking professors. Meanwhile judgments are encircling us about, like gathered clouds portending the approaching storm. Victory has been given to our arms in Egypt, but all does not seem yet to be ended there. The continent is in a seething state. France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Russia, &c., regarding each other's movements with the greatest suspicion, while democracy is arrayed against monarchy, secularism against sacerdotalism, communism against aristocracy, and the terrible 'dynamite party' against all law and order. Is not this evil of the Lord as a judgment? And, in addition to this, the clouds have poured forth their (at this season) almost unparalleled streams, and the hand of the sower has been sealed up, while many lives have been lost by fierce hurricanes both on sea and land, and many rendered utterly destitute: "so that the righteous may say, Verily

ere is a God that judgeth in the earth." And if the nation repent  
t, stripes will increase. The exalted and insulted Saviour shall  
e His foes with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a  
tter's vessel. Thrice-blessed are they who amid all these solemn  
spensations can say, "Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O  
rd, have we waited for Thee: the desire of our soul is to Thy  
me and the remembrance of Thee." Isa. xxvi. 8. For He will  
se to Himself His great power and reign. He will put down all  
posing rule, authority, and power. And He will come again, in  
the fulness of His heart's love, "to be glorified in His saints, and  
be admired in all them that believe." "Even so, come  
rd Jesus."  
THE EDITOR.

## HABAKKUK'S SONG.

### PART II.

*(Concluded from page 334).*

"The LORD is my GOD, and His name I will praise,  
And joyful in Him I will be;  
In the saddest of hours, in the darkest of days,  
My rest and salvation is He.

Yes, my soul hath a portion my foe cannot touch;  
A bliss that no change can destroy;  
When I turn from my trouble to this, it is such,  
My heart overfloweth with joy.

For I have eternal salvation in CHRIST,  
Whose love on the cross was made known;  
His wounded hand guides me, the way must be right:  
For all things work good to His Own.

With love everlasting my spirit to cheer,  
Omnipotent grace for my strength;  
Why need I the desolate wilderness fear,  
Or faint at the way's weary length?

Though I have no goodness, no wisdom, no strength,  
He can make my feet swift in His ways;  
In my very weakness His power He will show,  
And the desert shall echo His praise.



Yea, on 'high places' (once by my enemy held,  
 Whence his arrows to slay me were spent ;  
 But now, 'my high places') He'll make me to tread,  
 For victory to me He hath sent.  
 I walk on high places to higher ere long ;  
 Oh, who would not learn to sing Habakkuk's song ?  
 ANON.

## Letters by the Household of Faith.

LETTER BY MARY LEVITT.

Hull, July 10, 1878.

My very dearly-beloved Mrs. Machin,—I hope this will find you better, and able to write a line or two. I feel such a loss without your letter. May the Lord give you strength to recover and raise you up. I know the Lord can do wonderful things, because I know how *low* I have been brought, and am spared to the present time: nothing is too hard for the Lord. Oh, how I wish I could step in and see you ; but I can only think of you and pray for you, and hope you will soon be better again. Mr. Samuel came last Wednesday evening, but my letter for you was posted in the afternoon, so I could not name him: he is looking very well, but he has much to attend to in business. I told him I should like to see his son: he said he would bring him. I have received a letter and hymn from that dear blessed man of God, Mr. Edwards. I wish you to see it, so I will send it. You will see what a beautiful letter it is. How very kind ; he does not forget us ; oh no, and I am very sure we cannot forget him. There were two little cards in my letter, one was, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God;" the other was, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." I shall try and write to him again some day. I hope you will be able to write to him, I feel sure he will be very pleased for you to write. I hear nothing satisfactory about my rent money; they all know it is my right. One of the family sent for me for a few weeks, but they none of them want to pay it, so I have to leave it, for I can do nothing. Well now, my dear friend, we keep drawing nearer and nearer home ; we linger out until the appointed time. When I rise in the morning I have to say, Lord, help me and give me strength to attend to myself to-day; for I feel ready to drop. I feel just as weak as I can live to keep out of bed. I think I am worse in fine weather, but I am always over-set. I need not blame the weather, the poor body is nearly done for. May the Lord support both you and me. May we lean upon Him for all

we need, and be refreshed with His presence and the comfort of His word. He says, "Lo I am with you." "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee." O yes, He is, or I should never get through. I could never live without the Lord. He gives strength for the day—just for the day. We are the creatures of a day, we cannot boast of to-morrow. "All flesh is grass—withering grass—but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." He is the same through all generations. "*I am in a straight betwixt two, having a desire to depart.*" Phil. i. 23.

I'm kneeling at the threshold,  
Am weary, faint, and sore,  
I'm waiting for the dawning,  
For the opening of the door.

The morn—the morn is breaking,  
My toil will soon be o'er;  
I'm kneeling at the threshold,  
My hand is on the door.

The blessed, blessed angels,  
That know no grief nor sin;  
I see them at the portals,  
Prepared to let me in.

O Lord, I wait Thy pleasure,  
Thy time and way are best,  
But I'm wasted, worn, and weary,  
My Father, bid me rest.

My dear friend, accept my kindest love to you, Mr. Machin and Miss Machin, and favour me with a line when you can. The Lord bless you, keep you, comfort you, may His face shine upon you, and give you peace all the way home, is the prayer of yours very affectionately,  
MARY LEVITT.

## PURE GOLD FROM PURITAN AND OTHER MINES.

CHRIST AND THE BELIEVER.—Christ gives Himself to the soul, with all His excellencies, righteousness, preciousness, graces, and eminences, to be its Saviour, Head, and Husband, for ever to dwell with it in this holy relation. He looks upon the souls of His saints, likes them well, counts them fair and beautiful, because He hath made them so. (Cant. i. 15.) Let others think what they please, Christ redoubles it that the souls of His saints are very beautiful—even perfect—through His comeliness which He puts upon them. (Ezek. xvi. 14.) "O My dove," saith He, "that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Do not hide thyself, as one that flies to the clefts of the rocks; be not dejected, as one that hides herself behind the stairs, and is afraid to come forth to the company that enquires for her. Let not thy spirit be cast down at the weakness of thy supplications; let Me hear thy sighs and groans, thy breathings and pantings to Me; they

are very sweet, and delightful ; and thy spiritual countenance, thy appearance in heavenly things, is comely and delightful unto Me.

OWEN.

THE INCARNATION AND ITS BLESSED EFFECTS.—O the depths of eternal wisdom and surpassing grace ! Into this very time-world scene of sin and woe, just as the spring-tide of iniquity had risen to its utmost height, and the whole world seemed flooded with evil as with the waters of a second deluge—into this wrecked and ruined world, and, what was far worse, amidst these degraded and debased wild beasts of men, the Son of God came in the flesh. From the bosom of the Father did the Son of His love come forth to repair the waste places, the desolations of many generations. On this very sin-stricken earth, this abode of misery and crime, did the feet of the Son of God in our nature rest. This vale of tears He trod with holy steps ; in the world but not of it, “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” According to ancient promise, “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law,” (Gal. iv. 4). In that sacred humanity—real flesh and blood, the flesh and blood of the children, though not like theirs fallen, but holy and pure, the eternal Son of the Father stood in the gap and repaired the breach, took a holy portion of that nature which sin and Satan had defiled into union with His own Divine person, obeyed in it the law, enduring the curse, offered up His holy body and soul as a sacrifice for sin, laid down the life which for that purpose He had taken, and raising His incorruptible body from the tomb, took it with Him into the courts of bliss, there to sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. O the wisdom and power of God ! O the unfathomable depths of mercy and grace ! O the unsearchable treasures of goodness and love ! O the opening visions of eternal glory ! Satan baffled ! Sin blotted out ! The image of God restored ! Human nature raised to inconceivable dignity by its personal union with the Divine person of the Son of God ! The fallen church washed, justified, sanctified, and glorified with all the glory of her Head and Husband, and an eternal revenue of glory brought to a Triune Jehovah—to God the Father for His eternal purposes of wisdom and love ; to God the Son for His unspeakable condescension in the work of redemption ; to God the Holy Ghost for His forming the sacred humanity of Jesus, and sanctifying the elect of God to know His grace, be conformed to His image, and partake of His glory:

J. C. PHILPOT'S Meditations.

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